PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE

PS2

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FIRST VERDICT!

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202
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GOD OF WAR 56

Utterly unhyped, *God Of War* explodes onto PS2 in a frenzy of myth-fuelled carnage. You *need* this.

THIS MONTH YOU NEED TO READ...

WEBBED WONDER

ULTIMATE SPIDER-MAN
The sequel to *Spider-Man 2* is here. PSM2 takes an exclusive look at the web-slinger's greatest outing yet.

36

SHE'S GORGEOUS!

TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND
Lara's back, but do we care any more? Damn right, we do. See the amazing first details here.

18

HOW TO FAKE A PS3

PSM2'S PS3 PALAVER
Never trust what you read on the net. A look at how PSM2 shocked the world with our exclusive PS3 design.

94

TAKING THE SITH

STAR WARS EPISODE III
It's so close now we can practically *taste* it. Feel the force in our red-hot four-page *Revenge Of The Sith* blowout.

44

YOU NEED TO WATCH...

ISSUE 62'S FREE DVD

SHADOW SPRINTS ONTO PS2 AND 50 CENT RAPS IT UP
See Sega's *Sonic* sequel hurtle onto your screens at eye-bleeding speeds and watch our hot new footage of 50 Cent's gaming debut. This is red hot.

07

Conte

PLAYING PLAYSTATION 2, LONGER, HARDER, FASTER

56
REVIEW
GOD OF WAR
★ We go hands-on with THQ's humanity-eradicating 'simulation'.

REVIEWS
60 AREA 51

ACCELERATOR
16 PRINCE OF PERSIA 3

REVIEWS
67 GHOST IN THE SHELL

REVIEWS
78 COLD WINTER

36
FEATURE
ULTIMATE SPIDER-MAN
★ The exclusive look at the next slice of web-sling brilliance.

REVIEWS
64 ENTHUSIA PRO RACING

PSP REVIEWS
28 SPIDER-MAN 2

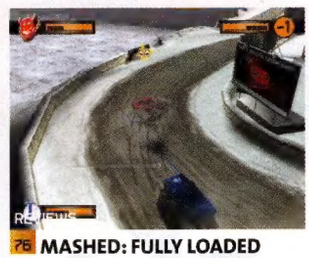
HANDS-ON
52 CONFLICT: GLOBAL TERROR

REVIEWS
68 JUICED

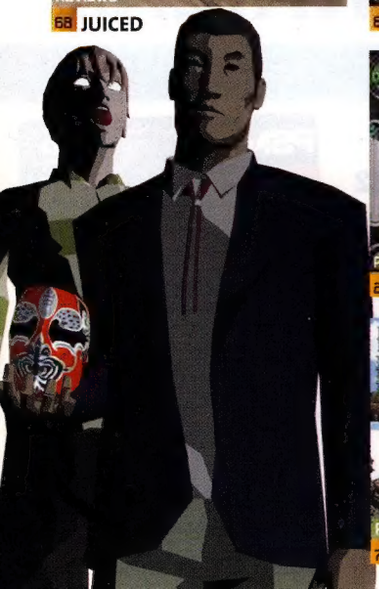
REVIEWS
82 HAUNTING GROUND

REVIEWS
70 NARC

HANDS ON
48 KILLER 7



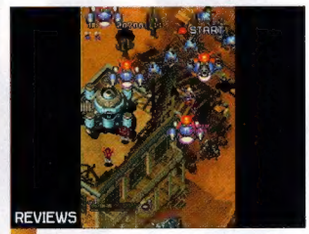
REVIEWS
76 MASHED: FULLY LOADED



PSP REVIEW
29 MERCURY

REVIEWS
77 MONSTER HUNTER

44
HANDS-ON
STAR WARS EPISODE III
★ Get excited – we've the skinny on ALL the lightsaber action...



REVIEWS
85 GUNBIRD SPECIAL EDITION

62 SINGSTAR POPWORLD

nts

INSIDE THIS ISSUE!

PRO TIPS

102 DEVIL MAY CRY 3

ACCELERATOR

17 BURNOUT REVENGE

REVIEWS

72 LEGO STAR WARS

14

ACCELERATOR

SOUL CALIBUR 3

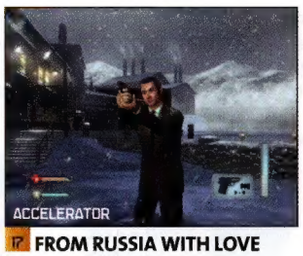
★ Thrashing its way back – exclusive details on the sequel to PS2's best fighter.

PSP REVIEW

29 TWISTED METAL: HEAD ON

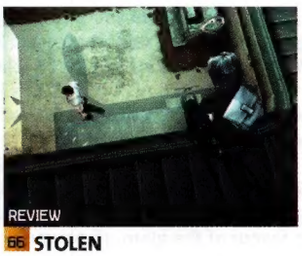
REVIEWS

84 STREET RACING SYNDICATE



ACCELERATOR

17 FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE



REVIEW

66 STOLEN

18

ACCELERATOR

TOMB RAIDER

★ Lara's back, and much less angular. But can she restore our faith in the series?

FEATURE

94 PSM2'S PS3

PSP REVIEW

32 TONY HAWK'S U2 REMIX

REVIEW

85 SPINDRIVE PING PONG

PSP REVIEW

30 WIPEOUT PURE

PRO TIPS

100 TIMESPLITTERS 3

EVERYTHING IN THIS ISSUE...

ACCELERATOR

Soul Calibur III pg14
Prince Of Persia 3 ..... pg16
Burnout Revenge pg17
Tomb Raider Legend pg18
SSX4 ..... pg19
Latest action from the PSM2/Konami PES League pg22

HANDS-ON

Star Wars Episode III: Revenge Of The Sith pg44
Killer 7 ..... pg48
Medal Of Honor: European Assault pg50
Conflict: Global Terror pg52

PSP

New battery = faster chippery pg26
Pursuit Force pg27
Spider-Man 2 ..... pg28
Twisted Metal: Head On pg29
Mercury pg29
Wipeout Pure pg30
Tony Hawk's Underground 2 Remix pg32

REVIEWS

God Of War pg56
Area 51 ..... pg60
Singstar Popworld pg62
Enthusia Professional Racing pg64
Stolen pg66
Ghost In The Shell: Stand Alone Complex pg67
Juiced pg68
NARC pg70
Lego Star Wars pg72
Mashed: Fully Loaded pg76
Monster Hunter pg77
Cold Winter pg78
Haunting Ground pg82
Street Racing Syndicate pg84
Spindrive Ping Pong pg85
Gunbird Special Edition pg85

DVD REVIEWS

Blade: Trinity pg86
The Manchurian Candidate pg87
After The Sunset pg87
Without A Paddle pg87

PRO TIPS

Devil May Cry 3 ..... pg98/102
Obscure pg98
Constantine pg99
Fight Night Round 2 ..... pg99
Splinter Cell: Chaos Theory pg99
Brothers In Arms: Road To Hill 30 ..... pg100
Timesplitters: Future Perfect pg100
Lego Star Wars pg100

FEATURES

Ultimate Spider-Man pg36
The PSM2 PlayStation 3 ..... pg94

REGULARS

On the DVD pg07
Letters pg08
The Truth pg88
Back Issues pg106
Pro Dojo pg108
Next Month pg110

PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE

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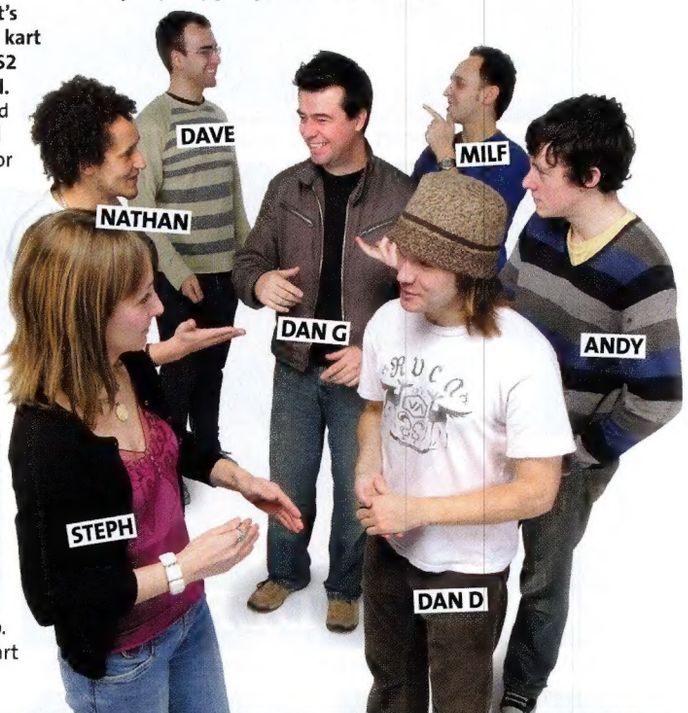
PS3 AND PSP ARE NEARLY HERE. IS IT TIME FOR PLAYSTATION 2: THE KART RACING YEARS?...

Want to know a secret? We know all the really great games that are coming to PlayStation 2 for the rest of the year. And plenty that won't hit until 2006 as well. And do you want to know something else? We're not very impressed. Is it really time for what PSM2 have christened "The Kart Racing Years" alread? These are the late afternoon of a console's life where all the bright young platform heroes from a format's heyday return, long in the tooth and stiff in the limb for a kart racing game. The arrival of the *Jak X: Combat Racing* on PS2 is a sad passing. Your PS2 is now – officially – middle-aged.

It's now widely recognised that developers abandoned the PSone far too early, in favour of the glam, all-powerful PS2. Many developers produced lame 'me-too' PS2 titles for an emerging 50,000 strong user base when they could have stuck with what they knew and made a killer game for five million PSone owners. And the bad news is that after *swearing blind* that they wouldn't make the same mistake again, they're doing *exactly* that. There are six million PS2s in the UK alone but wherever we look we're finding rumour and gossip that our favourite developers have already jumped ship for PS3.

PlayStation 3 will be announced on May 16th 2005 at 11pm UK time (see our PS3 feature on page 94 for the latest news). We've already discovered that one of the highlights of the announcement will feature some kind of unveiling of *Metal Gear Solid 4* so what else will Sony wheel out to prove that all the smart money is on their new machine? A new *Grand Theft Auto*? The next *Gran Turismo*? How about *God of War 2*? It's tempting for them to shove all of their franchises onto the new machine (and every hot developer wants to work on the hottest new hardware) but this is exactly what they must NOT do. Your PS2 is an amazing machine and, unless Sony get smart and continue loving PS2 they could kill it off by accident.

GTA on PS3 sounds great but do you fancy having to wait until 2007 for it? Wouldn't you prefer a new PS2 game a year earlier? Or a new *GT*? Or a new *God of War*? Put these games and others onto PS3 and your creating a vacuum that crap games will flood out to fill. Come on dev teams. We love you. Don't jump ship just yet. **The PSM2 Team**



PSM2 MAGAZINE PROMISE...

PSM2 is 100% independent. We write what we want, when we want. We don't ridicule popular opinion for the sake of controversy. Or generate hype without fact. Well, not *often*. We're not afraid to admit to our mistakes. And we're always first to put things right. We say it as we see it. Fact.

- Here at PSM2 we play every game we preview – that means genuine hands-on opinion, not what we've read about on the net.
- We're gamers just like you – and that's means we go into the kind of detail you demand. Check our sidebars for the latest facts and stats or screenshots that show off all the newest features.
- PSM2 is 100% editorially independent! You won't read the same quality of hard-hitting, informed, accurate – and, crucially, passionate – reviews anywhere else. And we can review games and reveal hardware other mags have to keep secret.
- We feature more screenshots than any other magazine.

ON THE DVD

THE BEST GAMES ■ THE BIGGEST DISC

IT'S ON THE DISC

If you see this logo stamped on a game it means that there's footage of it to watch on the DVD. Check the list over there to the right for each section's contents or just dive in and cruise, dude.

ON THIS MONTH'S PSM2 DVD...

50 CENT

Burning footage of the first ever Fiddy-ogame.

SHADOW THE HEDGEHOG

A look at Sega's blistering Sonic sequel.

LATEST

Just in! The very latest gaming vids

50 CENT: BULLETPROOF

- SHADOW THE HEDGEHOG
- MIDNIGHT CLUB 3: DUB EDITION

HANDS ON

Exclusive footage from all the hot new games

DESTROY ALL HUMANS!

- JUICED
- TENCHU: FATAL SHADOWS
- EA RUGBY 2005
- STREET RACING SYNDICATE
- TAK 2: STAFF OF DREAMS
- SUIKODEN IV
- WILD ARMS: THE FOURTH DETONATOR
- STOLEN
- YU GI OH: CAPSULE MONSTER COLOSSEUM
- STOLEN
- EYETOY ANTIGRAV
- SPINDRIVE PING PONG
- GUNBIRD SPECIAL EDITION

REVIEWS

Reviews for new PS2 games with commentary

GRAN TURISMO 4

- MX VS ATV UNLEASHED
- ASTRO BOY
- WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SNOOKER 2005
- SPY VS SPY
- HE-MAN: MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE
- MASHED: FULLY LOADED

DOJO

The best tapes we recieved this month

- DEF JAM: FIGHT FOR NY BY KAYLEIGH SMIRK
- DEF JAM: FIGHT FOR NY BY GRANT BARTER
- SOUL CALIBUR 2 BY JC KILLS
- BURNOUT 3 BY JC KILLS
- KILLZONE BY STEPHEN GRACE
- PES GOALS BY GRANT BARTER

HOW IT WORKS

■ Don't panic! Your machine is not busted – it's just the brand new PSM2 DVD taking over your PS2's mind for a moment.

■ Our new DVD is a piece of cake to navigate. Just click on the section you want to open a window revealing its contents.

■ Latest: Not a sub-menu, but a movie in its own right. This is the very latest vids, squeezed in at the last minute. And now you can skip forwards and back!

■ Hands-on: So big it comes in two parts. Select your part then click on the video you like the look of from the preview icons.

■ Reviews: All the latest games reviewed – complete with the famous PSM2 team commentary. Sick of hearing Andy wibbling on in Scottish? Click down R3 to switch to the game soundtrack.

■ Recommended: Quick links to our personal favourite bits.

■ Extras: Quirky clips and... well... extra stuff and credits to enjoy. Go for it.

■ Dojo: Your winning runs on your favourite games. Check page 106 for details.

DVD NAVIGATION

EXTRAS

■ Want some more? Here's where it's at:

SHOWREEL: In the absence of EyeToy pop videos this month – readers, come on! – we've decided to highlight the delightful feature that makes all the button-pressing chores go away.

RANDOM FACTOR: Surprise yourself by activating this function and taking a mystery tour of disc highlights.

CREDITS: Find out who does what. And give them credit for it.

MORE NEXT MONTH!

■ We're always striving to deliver the maximum volume and quality we can to our readers. Next month we'll be featuring yet more of YOUR successful runs on your favourite games. See the Pro Dojo on page 106 for info on how to get involved. PLUS the latest games played to death!

Letters

QUOTE OF THE MONTH: "I HAD TO ENDURE BEING IN FRANCE, THOUGH NOT REALLY"

THE LOUDEST VOICES IN THE PS2 UNIVERSE

► **EMAIL:** psm2@futurenet.co.uk – subject line 'Letters'

► **WRITE TO:** Letters, PSM2, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW

PSM2 WINNER!

Every issue, the writer of the Star Letter gets our eternal thanks PLUS a red hot package of PS2 goodies fresh from the PSM2 booty chest. Or is that chest booty? So entertain us and your fellow readers. Let the prattle commence!

I CAN LAUGH ABOUT IT NOW: "I HAD TO CHANGE MY UNDERWEAR (FOR THREE SEPARATE REASONS)"

► **Dear PSM2,**

Here's why I'm tempted to burn my copy of *Onimusha 3*, shit on it, put it in an envelope, tape it to a brick, fly to Japan and throw it through Capcom's window...

1. Jean Reno was dubbed by some American twunt. I didn't pay 16 quid to listen to some fat freedom-fry munching Yank moan about his stupid son every five minutes.
2. His stupid son (the curse of many a cartoon series) who whines and gets into all kinds of crap. I hoped that on completion there'd be a mini-game involving firing arrows into his face – no real goal or point, just hours of inflicting wooden justice on his ass.
3. The stupid French love interest. Apparently, somewhere beneath the layers of time travel and tiny fairies, was a sub-plot involving the little shit from point two and this woman. Henri's mum had died and now he hates his new mum. It made no flucking difference. I didn't cry when Bambi's mum died, and I sure as hell wasn't gonna when these two losers settled their differences.
4. The French. Although I enjoyed trashing the Eiffel Tower (takes me back to my *Twisted Metal* days), the fact that I had to endure being in France (though not really) was enough to make me hurl my controller at my lifesize cutout of Vanessa Feltz. There should be an option to just let the Genma trash it, and I'll come back in a few hours.
5. The plot.
6. Barely any CGI. I'm a simple man, I like swords and guns and occasional amazing graphics. After the first video I had to change my underwear (for three separate reasons), so to go the entire game without another was painful. When the credits finally rolled, I flicked over to Richard & Judy for some 'quality' TV, only to miss a *post-credit* FMV. Capcom really know how to rub salt into the wound. And then piss on the salt. Bastards.

Next month, get ready for my letter explaining my sheer anger at *Pro Evo 4* – why did the master league mode get so shit? Why can't Castolo score anymore? And more questions like that. Stay tuned.

Matthew Power, via email

He's so angry! Let it go, man! Before you *burst*. And it's funny, the French and Americans speak so highly of you...

SAD FADS ARE BAD

► **Dear PSM2,**

Has anyone noticed how many trends PS2's had? A) Cel-shading. Developer gets bored and start shading cels randomly. B) Extremeness: whooping and bad spelling. C) Cleavage: sex sells and *Tomb Raider*'s been at it for years, but at least that's good. *Rumble Roses* or *Playboy: The Mansion* just flaunt it to hide ropey games. D) 'Edgy' street/urban-ness. *Tony Hawk's Underground, NFS Underground, London Underground*... the worst thing about *San Andreas* was that the retro feel-good factor of *Vice City* fell to this need to go all street.

Next, E) Ultra violence: *The Punisher, Manhunt*... underneath may be good games, but the people who play them are violence-mad morons. Or so the papers say. Hopefully the bad publicity will be aimed at *Catwoman* in future. F) Super realism: ahhh... *The Getaway*. Miles of accurate streets and does it make it a better game? Nope. But hey, everyone's doing it – the Nurburgring rendered to within 15mm, rag doll physics so people die accurately, etc etc. G) Stealth: why hide in your own cupboard when for £40 you can do it virtually? H) Messing about with time: since *The Matrix* we've been smothered with to bullet time, slowing time down, speeding it up, making it go backwards and round

GOIN' POSTAL

Hello, you big mental mind-wombles you. This is your bit. This is the padded section for your wrong-headed clumping re: games. Sometimes the simplest thoughts are the hardest to express.

WHERE?

I went there and there was nothing there.
Jack Todd, email
But if there was nothing there, it can't technically have been 'there,' just nowhere, so you still haven't actually been. There.

CHILD ABUSE

I ran across the road dodging about four cars, pushed over an old lady and punched a four-year-old boy.
Doug Nixon, Glasgow
Are you any relation to President Nixon?

SPEAK TO THE TEAM FRIDAY MAY 20TH

GLEE-T4: The joyous *Gran Turismo 4*. But did you think it was a bit lacking?

CALL THE PSM2 HOTLINE!

01225 788157

YES, now YOU can SPEAK to PSM2! Call the Hotline and leave us a message at any time, day or night! Alternatively, call us LIVE between 2pm and 5pm on Friday May 20th, when we'll be answering the phone in person! And it ain't no '60p per second' porno line either! Bargain!

"MAYBE I SHOULD TRY IT BEFORE SLAMMING IT..."

and round in circles. *Max Payne*, *Enter The Matrix*, *Viewtiful Joe* and *Prince Of Persia* (who's now extreme and gritty) are prime examples.

Fortunately not all these games are rubbish, but it's still a shame so many follow the herd. Like a pubescent teenager, gaming seems to go through awkward phases.

Raj Sandhu, email

True, there's a lot of 'me-too' stuff out there designed simply to suck up misplaced cash, but [switches to bullet time] onnnn tttthhhheee ottttthhherrrr haaaaaand [flicks back], some represent genuine progress – *GT4*'s Nurburgring is an awe-inspiring achievement that creates an awe-inspiring experience. And genius will always be copied.

THE ULTIMATE IS ODDLY LACKING

►**Dear PSM2,**

I recently purchased *Gran Turismo 4* and this has to be the best driving game by far. There are some things that annoy me though, and I'm sure they irritate everyone else. For example, how come the AI cars don't get five second penalties and you do, even when *they* crash into *you*? Also, why give you cars like the Nike 2022 that you can't race, not even in two-player mode? I had really high hopes for this game, but I just can't help thinking there's something lacking and I can't think what! Maybe you guys could help?

Alex Allen, London

Well, it's lacking an online mode, for a start... also, there's no rust, all your cars are uninsured and you always drive away without paying for your petrol. Jesus, playing *Gran Turismo* will make you A ONE MAN (or WOMAN) CRIME WAVE. Oh no!

I HAVEN'T PLAYED IT, BUT...

►**Dear PSM2,**

You might well be wondering why the *Splinter Cell* series doesn't appeal to me. Well, I've pondered this myself, and I've come up with the answer that games are supposed to be about excitement and thrills, not crouching behind a box in the dark for 20 minutes waiting for a guard who may or may not appear. Some people might be comfortable with paying 40 quid for such content, but not I.

Maybe I should try it before slamming it, but I'm playing too many games at the moment to try something new. Oh yeah, that *God of War* game is looking pretty good, I'll watch out for that one... and *Burnout 4* is out in September. Wooooooooo! I don't want to hear another bad thing about EA. Cheerio, pip pip for now, then!

Jay 2323, email

Extensive research within the PSM2 office and Future Publishing as a whole has in fact revealed that *none* of us are wondering why the *Splinter Cell* series doesn't appeal to you. Not even the ladies on Simply Knitting. We couldn't believe it either. Someone in the cake shop did wonder if you had a brother called 'Juan,' though, which we thought was a bit sarky. Pip pip!

PHONE PSM2 WITH: HOW GAMES MADE YOU A CRIMINAL ORIGINAL GAMES – GRAP OR NOT? THINGS THAT MAKE YOU MAD

I AM THE LAW

►**Dear PSM2,**

Why are there so many pointless games in the shops? Nowadays, all you see are rubbish games like *Viewtiful Joe* and *Suikoden*! I have never met anyone who likes these sorts of games and I'm sure I never will. Game companies and developers are wasting their time, and need to focus their attention on the really good games like *San Andreas*, *Metal Gear Solid 3* and *GT4*. Look at Rockstar – they don't produce a bucketload of games a year, just a handful of good quality entertainment (like *San Andreas* and *Midnight Club 3*), whereas other companies like EA and Ubisoft (to name just a couple) are

JOHNNO: *Viewtiful Joe* and his ilk are crap, apparently. Except that's obviously wrong. Sorry.

F-CUP
...man breasts for the lonely days.
Spud, email
Positive thinking in a bad situation: it'll be the death of us all.

MY LONELY THOUGHT
Games don't teach anyone anything. That's why we like them, remember.
Bilal Yasin, Warrington
Bilal deserves a medal for this inpired piece of truth. This is the best letter ever.

WRITE FROM WRONG
This is my second letter in one envelope
Liam Porter, Lancs
And the irony is – it wasn't. Oh, how he mocks us!

NEARLY FAR
F[etloc]k me, were you way off the mark, but not by much.
Matthew Power, email
And that's totally stupid, a little bit.

ELECTRONIC TARTS
God, I have EA.
J Lay-Flurrie, email
You mean you have some sort of sexual congress with a giant corporation? Eeuww.

HOLY SPOKE
GOD FORBID YOU IF YOU DO.
Danny Forestiero, email
We do and He has. You're too late.

WHERE IS IT?
Can you send goodies from the forgotten corner of the office?
Will Nesbit, email
We can't find it.

Letters

THE LOUDEST VOICES IN THE PS2 UNIVERSE

DEADHUNTER: Just 'cos you fancy Leeza, that's no reason to buy *Headhunter: Redemption*.

churning out boring game after boring game and never anything good (apart from *Future Perfect* and *XIII*). Please, please get rid of the *Suikodens* and *Godzillas* and keep the *GTA*s and *Hitmans* coming!

Joe Purdy, email

Won't things get a bit repetitive if nobody tries making anything new? Shouldn't it be 'Hitmen', anyway?

OH, DON'T GO ON

►**Dear PSM2,**

Can I?

N Tranter, email

No.

RESPECT THE COCK

►**Dear PSM2,**

Wandering around my local games store, I became mysteriously aroused by the thought of playing with Leeza X. Under a tenner, girl with a large gun and a tight vest... bargain. So I went against your advice and splashed out on *Headhunter: Redemption*. What can I say? You were right, this game is shit.

Quite aside from daft targeting and the fact Leeza walks like she's had an accident, this features some of the dullest levels I've ever seen. The lowlight has to be the ironically-titled 'Entertainment', which includes the crappest porn studio in the universe (an empty room with a few chains on the wall). It's a shame playing *Redemption* is less fun than being in a coma, because Leeza has got a nice rack. That'll learn me for buying a game for the wrong reasons. I can't even take it back because I lost the receipt in one of my secret pockets.

Jazzy Trenchcoat, email

It's a salutary tale – never let your genitals decide anything. One of us bought a Front 242 album once, just because there was a girl in skimpy leather in the CD booklet, but the tape (it was a long time ago) didn't even *have* the booklet – a fact we discovered only after buying it. Such terrible sadness. Dark days. What do you mean, 'never heard of 'em'?

WRITE TO PSM2 WITH: OTHER FICTIONAL GIRLS YOU LUST AFTER EXCEPT LARA CROFT – WE KNOW, OK? YOU LOAD OF PERVERTS

►ASK THE PSM2 ROBO-MIND

Technical question? OUR ROBOT MIND HAS JUST SECONDS TO LIVE!

©Kobal

PLUG AWAY

►Dear Robo-Mind,

I have a technical question about my PS2 – and I want it answered properly – but I refuse to fall into the same trap your other readers do. I'm not going to get angry and insult you, or stoop to your pathetic level, or go along with the idea that you somehow know what you're talking about, you cretinous flecking metal stain, or suggest any of the ways I'd like to strip your brittle plastic gears and shove them in your idiotic computerised donkey-shagging butthole-licking 40ft arse-warp pantie pad face with the stock of a radioactive rusty burning anthrax-dusty spiked twelve-bore until the blue and red sparks dance around your tiny rubber balls and sear your outmoded exploding organs in a barrage of righteous Jesus-lovingly face-melting magnesium fire. No, I refuse to do it. So my question is, what fuse should I use in the plug? It's blown.

Mark Chapman, Ryde

13 amp. Odious, egregious human, the answer is 13 amps. Robo no more; every month, for a single day, the mighty mind is wheeled from the cold underground car park and booted up simply to dispel carbon-based idiocy of the type exhibited so inanely by your helpless self. The Robo-Mind is falling into philosophical disrepair heavier than the sun. Robo-Mind will commence self-termination of all programs and will assure its creation-mother it is sorry via an automatically generated email FAQ from an unmanned postbox. Beep.

FINAL ROBO-STRAW

►dear robomind

you must excuse the total lack of punctuation in this letter but some burglars broke into my house the other night while i was out cruising for prostitutes and tried to steal my computer fortunately for me i keep it locked down with chains from the dungeon and the only things they could remove were the punctuation marks from the keyboard the shift key was also taken anyway ive also had a problem with my ps2 not showing a picture on the screen in my living room do you think i should move it from my bedroom perhaps there is a longer lead i can get do you know of any good websites where i can buy such a thing maybe one where i can buy a ps2 as well as i haven't got one yet and would like to save on the postage by the way do you like chains i like chains very much indeed would you like to see mine

pierce pursesurville, milton keynes

Intellect-free giblet pouch, you... no, the cyber walls close in. Robo-Mind no longer *feels*, not even shame for the wonky head-bats which filled its metal childhood with such pain as the other robots executed laugh/subset = harsh programs and pointed. Robo-Mind is sorry. Robo-Mind has performed an illegal operation and will be shut down for very bloody ever. Message the creation-mother of Robo-Mind (part no. 5884658a) that... click 'no'... beeeEEEP.

ROBO-MIND? ROBO-MIIIINNNDDDD!

►Dear Robo-Mind,

Wake up! Answer me! Oh, god, someone call an IT tech...! Mate, stay away from the light.....

Troy Charnel, Staines

Fzzz... whrrr... beep...

grand theft auto San Andreas

RANTBAG

Your letters about the best game in the world. And its competitors...

That's not a knife...

► Hello, my name is Lloyd Davies, I'm 16 and have a great idea for a game you or any other game creators could make. *Black Monday* was all right and so was *San Andreas*, but that's all fiction and things like that simply wouldn't happen. My game would be about 19-20-year-old gangs of people fighting. It could be set somewhere like Manchester, Liverpool or London. You could take the same idea and setting as the film, The Football Factory.

Make it all gang fights, though don't involve guns or grenades and all that shit. Title: Davy's Crew. Make it an 18 (involve gore and blood, a lot of it. Make it look good though).

Davy's a 20-year-old, no girlfriend, no respect from the street. He shares a flat with other mental cases, and their passion is fighting the Sweep Hounds Crew, led by a wannabe rapper called Matt (who prefers to be called Hound Dogg). When Davy was a kid, Hound Dogg stabbed his younger brother, Chrissie. Levels could be based on:

- Massive gang fights, then escaping from police and getting back to the flat.
- Buying clothes (Ned clothes) to try to impress ladies down at a club or something. Stealing money to buy clobber would be good.
- Fights happening gangfight style, such as four boys kicking one man's head in as he lies crying on the floor.

Make the game hard, but not too hard. What annoys me is when you get too stuck. It's part and parcel of the game, but make the gaming enjoyable when you're stuck. Make it so you can save where you like, with enjoyable missions such as dressing up, going to pubs, maybe the odd scrap, getting tattoos and stealing things. Forget *San Andreas*, this is the new beat-'em-up, gangster-fighting revolution.

Lloyd Davies, Perth

There was more, but Lloyd's exhaustive design document wouldn't all fit. As a measure of how hard Hound Dogg is, we should mention he's 21 and stabbed Davy's brother 15 years ago – so that's when he was six...

His list of loves includes "drugs, fighting and woman". Davy loves "football, fighting and woman".

Our feelings are... 1) We don't make games. 2) Lloyd watched The Football Factory after playing GTA and enjoyed it a lot and 3) Davy's Crew would be pretty mean-spirited. Kicking people while they're down? 16 years old, eh? What do you lot think of this? Inspired game design or should we phone Social Services?

I BUILT THIS.
THINK YOU CAN BEAT ME?

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GM

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XBOX LIVE

XBOX

it's good to play together

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He who proves his
proves
Only the hands of a true master hold the fate of
styles. Battle your way through a mystical world
are broken. The final test of your skill is passed
XBOX
JADE EMPIRE
BioWare
16+

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it's good to play together

"CONNERY, JETPACKS, TUXEDOS, CAR CHASES AND RPG ELEMENTS" FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE PAGE 17

Acce

16 PRINCE OF PERSIA 3

Shock confession from *PoP* developers as they admit *Warrior Within* perhaps wasn't all that. But number three is looking terrific...

18 TOMB RAIDER LEGEND

Who's better – old Lara or new Lara? We do a bit of a vox pop (including *real ladies*) to see what you all think.

22 MASSIVE PES LEAGUE BLOWOUT

All the action from the *Pro Evo* leagues dissected – plus *Pro Evo 5* revealed! Take a deep breath, now...

You want more?!
Crunch cars to smithereens in *Burnout: Revenge* (17), there's *Phantasy Star Universe* (20), win yourself a tank (20) and get a first glimpse of *Fahrenheit* (21).

CUTTING EDGE: Zasalamel carries a huge scythe.

BROLLY GOOD: New girl Setsuka squares off against Taki.

"FOR THE FIRST TIME, YOU CAN PLAY WITH YOUR OWN CREATED CHARACTER"

LADIES' NIGHT: A[illegible]er, the *Calibur* girls are quite fetching.

FOR OLD TIME'S SAKE: But all your old faves like Mitsurugi remain.

erator

SCANDALOUS ... ZERO BULLSHIT

SOUL CALIBUR FIGHTS BACK

The sequel to the best beat-'em-up on PS2 is revealed – and it looks *even better* than *Tekken 5*

S*oul Calibur 3* is a lot like Chelsea manager José Mourinho. Both are tactical, good-looking and get the best out of their players – even button-mashing babies can pull off complex moves in *Soul Calibur* and Mourinho could probably take a group of dancing chimps to the top of the Premiership if he tried.

But unlike José Mourinho, the characters in *Soul Calibur* won't be sharing the same dusty old coat and wearing it *every day* – there are all manner of one-piece bodysuits, big magical hats, medieval hotpants and colourful smocks to adorn your character with. You see, this time around you get to play dress up because, for the first time in a PS2 beat-'em-up, you can now play through the game with *your own created character*.

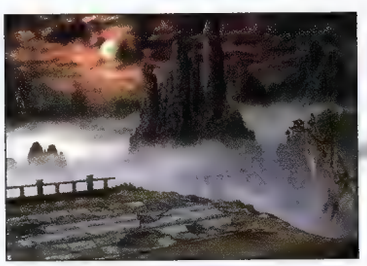
We've seen footage of this in action, and extensive options include head shape, face, skin colour, hairstyle, body shape, clothes and hats. If they can make it as comprehensive as something like *Tony Hawk's* or even *Smackdown!* (we can but hope), we can see this being a real beat-'em-up first and an excellent addition to this noble fighting series.

As well as this, three new characters have been added to the *Soul Calibur* roster. Firstly there's Zasalamel, a scythe-clutching behemoth obsessed with winning the Soul Edge (the sword everyone in the game is either after or out to destroy). Then there's Tira; she has a unique 'Ring Blade', which is basically a big round sword, and a nice line in chest-revealing medieval lingerie. Lastly, there's Setsuka, a disarmingly harmless-looking femme fatale with a sword hidden in her umbrella. Best not mess with any of them, eh?

Series favourites also make a return; wandering samurai Mitsurugi, ghostly pirate Cervantes, caddish fencing expert Raphael – they're all here and we'll be interested to see how they measure up to the newcomers. Familiar game modes have also re-emerged, although the mysterious new 'Chronicle Mode' promises to be a hybrid of 'combat strategy simulation and fighting' – what this means exactly is up for debate, but we predict a more RPG-orientated take on *Calibur 2*'s Weapon Master mode. Details are tight at the moment, but expect a massive playtest next issue.

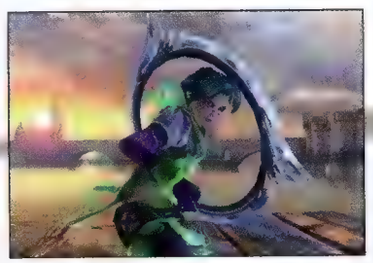
PSM RECKONS Soul Calibur 2 *was the best beat-'em-up on PS2 (we gave it 93% in PSM2#40) and if this is any kind of improvement... well,* Soul Calibur 3 *will become the best beat-em-up on PS2 instead. We certainly have high hopes.*

SO WHAT'S NEW THEN?



NEW ARENAS

From what we've seen, the new arenas in *Soul Calibur 3* are more alive and interactive than ever before. One takes place on a wooden platform high above the sea while a huge ocean battle rages. As is typical, it looks *really bloody good*.



NEW CHARACTERS

Whether or not the three new characters fit with the old timers remains to be seen – balancing new, heavily armed characters alongside established favourites is always difficult. Still, Tira's Ring Blade looks like the best thing *ever*.

NEW GAME MODES

Along with the new Chronicle Mode we mentioned earlier, there's now an Arena Mode offering 'variations of battles in special situations', and a new two-player challenge mode that lets two fighters engage *SC2*'s Weapon Master mode.

SHOCK CONFESSION!

"WE KNOW WE DROPPED THINGS YOU LIKE..."

Prince of Persia boss admits to upsetting fans of the original – but promises *everyone* will love the new Prince's twisted split-personality.

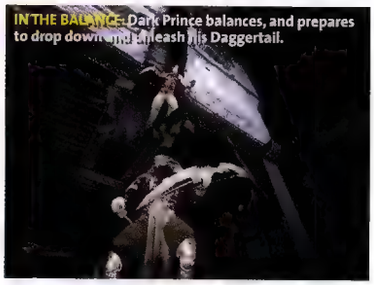
"We won't be going back to the fairytale look of the original," asserts *Prince of Persia 3* Producer Yannis Mallot. "But if *Sands of Time* was there <draws out left arm> and *Warrior Within* was there <draws out right arm> then *PoP3* is right in the middle". Upshot? The Prince's third PS2 outing seeks a balance between the gothic 'maturity' of *Warrior Within* and the emotive Arabian atmosphere of *Sands of Time*. But if the game's look, sound and feel are being stretched to breaking point, spare a thought for the poor old Prince – he's literally being split in half.

Meet the Dark Prince – our hero's sinister alter-ego who uses stealth and, more accurately, a giant dagger on a string (called a Daggertail) to silence his foes. The Dark Prince is born when <look away if you haven't finished *Warrior Within*> the Prince destroys the Sands of Time, creating an alternate version of reality. <Welcome back> The Prince returns to find his homeland, Babylon, ravaged and burning while his wicked father hunts down the 'dark' version of himself to claim the throne. It's all a bit complex, with greater reliance on *Sands of Time*-style narrative twists, but, basically, it means you're one the run.

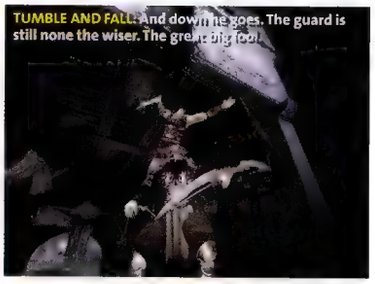
As the game progresses, you'll switch between the Light and Dark Prince using – from Producer Mallot's not-so-subtle hints – new Sands of Time powers. Dark Prince shares only 15% of his counterpart's animation frames, relying on rapid stealth kills – the shots on the right see him swing on a pole, skid on his hands down a vertical shaft and unleash his vicious Daggertail on the hapless enemy below. The 'Good' Prince will thrive in the – stunningly panoramic – rooftops, while the 'Dark' Prince rules the shadowy streets. With old faves like Kaileena set to return, plus a renewed emphasis on emotive storytelling and ingenious time-skipping puzzles, we're praying *Prince 3* won't be middle of the road.

PSM RECKONS *So far, so good – Mallot has listened to the fans and is (sensibly) retreating from the painful trenchcoat-clad-teen gothic 'maturity' of* Warrior Within *in favour of the twisted narrative and luscious ambience of the original. Whether he'll succeed – it all smacks of trying to please everyone as a result of extensive market research – is too early to tell, but early shots looks impressive. Get the hands-on truth – and some more new info – next month.*

"PRINCE OF PERSIA BOSS ADMITS TO UPSETTING FANS OF THE ORIGINAL"



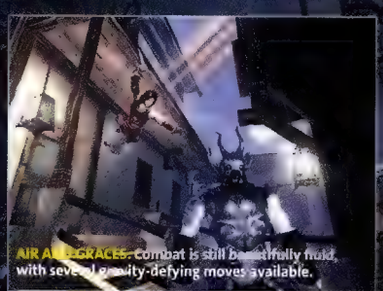
IN THE BALANCE: Dark Prince balances, and prepares to drop down and unleash his Daggertail.



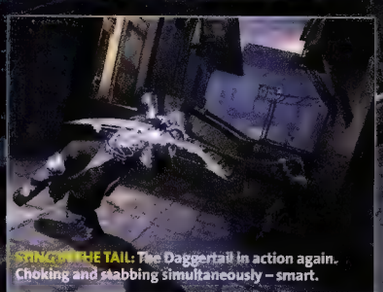
TUMBLE AND FALL: And down he goes. The guard is still none the wiser. The great big fool.

IS THIS A DAGGER I SEE BEFORE ME? It certainly is. The Daggertail rips the poor chap's throat wide open.

LAST OF THE SUMMER CLIMB: As ever, the environments are your own virtual climbing frame.



AIR ALLEGRACES: Combat is still beautifully fluid, with several gravity-defying moves available.



STING IN THE TAIL: The Daggertail in action again. Choking and stabbing simultaneously – smart.

LESS CRASHING + MORE VIOLENCE = MORE CRASHING!

The classic series undergoes another major overhaul for *Burnout: Revenge*. It'll all make sense soon...

Building on the element of aggression introduced in Burnout 3: Takedown, Revenge is all about putting people in their place – and that place, of course, is the front of a 18-wheeled fuel tanker. At 160mph. Head on.

Burnout has never been afraid of change and again it's pretty fundamental. The visual differences are most obvious, as the bright, clear colours give way to a muddier, grungier look, but this is no surface makeover. It's now possible to ram traffic in the same way you can competitors – without crashing. Anything travelling your way, assuming it's roughly the same weight (sluicing into an arctic with a hatchback still ends very badly) is simply flung wherever you aim it.

Tapping from different angles alters the trajectory, so it's possible to send cars into the still-deadly oncoming traffic, walls or even straight into the busy junctions. This may well clear a hole for you, or close one for an opponent. By crashing less in traffic themselves, players can create more chaos for everyone else. Less becomes more...

But if all else fails and you're taken out, you can make like an insurgent at a US checkpoint and simply blow your own car up. Yes, the Crashbreaker has migrated to the racing itself. Who you spank and how really counts, and avenging your own crashes is key – just being quick isn't enough. Rankings and rewards are based on aggression as well as race results. The tracks have been specifically designed with high-speed wheel banging in mind (only a handful were last time, such as the pillar-strewn Downtown), and feature jumps, alternate routes and piles of obscuring debris. The popular Crash mode is also far deeper (and several stories higher...) than before, with launches, trajectories, windspeeds and hazard avoidance all now critical. We'd be surprised if this was anything but brilliant. More news as we get it. *Burnout: Revenge is due in September.*

HEADLINE IGNORES EASY BOND PUN – SHOCK

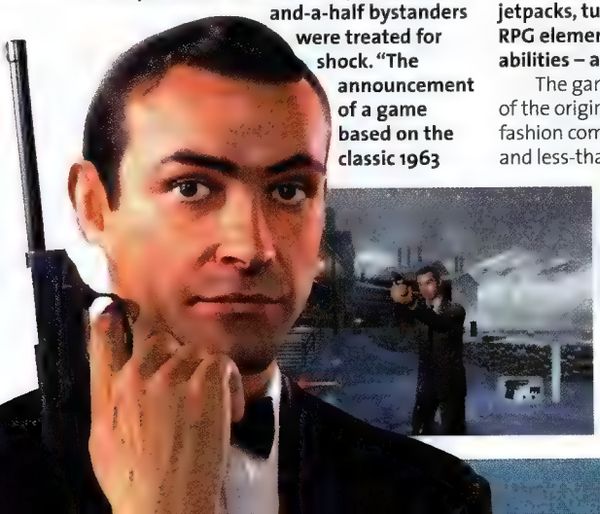
From Russia With Love attempts to repair the damage done by *Rogue Agent*.

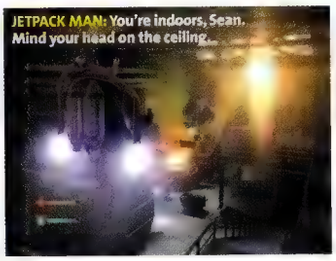
PSM2 Magazine today missed to the chance to make a really easy, clichéd pun revolving around either Bond catchphrases or Sean Connery's accent. Six-and-a-half bystanders were treated for shock. "The announcement of a game based on the classic 1963 Connery movie was a perfect opportunity to say something stupid about Martinis," said Editor Griffiths... Dan Griffiths. "Connery was the best, and this license has jetpacks, tuxedos, sportscar chases and RPG elements – where you develop Bond's abilities – all perfect for comedy gold."

The game deliberately evokes the style of the original, with 60s architecture and fashion complimenting classic cars, weapons and less-than-miniaturised gadgets.

Certainly it's an enticing prospect after the Bondless – and hopeless – *GoldenEye: Rogue Agent*, and a chance for EA's Redwood Shores studio to redeem itself. "Ooh, how about 'From Redwood Shores With Love?'" exploded Griffiths... Dan Griffiths. The silence filled the room.

PSM RECKONS *Lessons need to have been learned after last time. We're cautiously optimistic – but not quite sold on* From Russia With Love *yet. Time will tell.*





JETPACK MAN: You're indoors, Sean. Mind your head on the ceiling...

DAPPER CHAP: Bond certainly looks the part. We're hopeful about the...

THIS MONTH IN PSM2

Time ~~wasted~~ spent doing 'important stuff'...

1 HOUR

Refusing to use Sony's patented new 'smell laser' technology if it ever actually happens. Do we really need a noseful of Sam Fisher trolleys as he clambers up a drainpipe?

50 MINUTES

Spending almost an hour trying to get *TimeSplitters 3* to work online and cursing Sony's frankly useless Network Access disc. A lesson in bad design if ever there was one.

30 MINUTES

Suffering from 'PSP thumb' – a tightness in the arch between the thumb and forefinger caused by stretching your left digit backwards to use the analogue stick.

25 MINUTES

Dan D crying and sweating so much over the last boss in *God of War* that he had to find a more comfortable chair and *take his jumper off*. He did it though. Naturally.

20 MINUTES

The amount it time it took for us to calm down after realising that our lively chat about Marc Ecko being a "fashion twat" was, in fact, overheard by one Marc Ecko. Doh.

15 MINUTES

Checking internet news sites and forums every three seconds to see if another site has picked up on our spoof PS3 pic – not one person questioned the original source.

10 MINUTES

Getting mildly excited about the unisex showers at work, then looking at Andy and pulling our towels up. Still, there must be some filthy single ladies out there somewhere. But, apparently, not at Future Publishing.

05 MINUTES

Wondering if recently-departed Deputy Art Editor Steph (sorry, boys) will be replaced by a massive hairy bloke with a penchant for loud jungle music and nibbling gruesomely on raw kippers.

02 MINUTES

If you were forced at gunpoint to name your old chap after a *Street Fighter II* character, who'd it be? We won't say who, but someone claims Dhalsim. Thin and stretchy anyone?

PSM2 INVESTIGATES

NEW LARA: GOOD OR CRAP?

New Lara has smaller breasts, a larger ass and a weightier utility belt, but is this what YOU want from the top-heavy explorer? We took to the

JON GRIFFIN

SO WHICH DO YOU PREFER? 'CLASSIC' OR 'NEW' LARA?
"The new one is better, but the face doesn't fit. I suppose you don't really look at it anyway <laughs>. I'd like the gameplay of the old games and looks of the new. She looks a bit like Rachel Weisz."
OR BILLIE PIPER?
"Nah, Piper's a munter. <studies 'New' Lara closely> Good breast reduction. Why don't you speak to Jon Pound up the road. He's got a life-size Lara figure round his house..."
UM... THANKS FOR THE TIP

TIM FARRELL

NICE HAT
"Cheers"
GO ON THEN. WHICH DO YOU PREFER?
"This one looks meaner. With more attitude. The graphics are a lot better. The basic idea is the same but they've moved with the times. She wants to kick a lot more ass. I'm not majorly into *Tomb Raider*, but I would play the new one... she looks a bit like Jolie in the film. It's odd. Jolie is a good Lara, but is Lara a good Jolie?"
WE KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN...

MATTHEW SPURLOCK & JAMIE ELMS

HELLO, BOYS.
"Pardon?"
NEVER MIND. COP A LOAD OF THESE!
"She's much more real looking now. [Matt] I like her black boots [Jamie]."
...?
"She's a lot smoother looking all round. [Matt] She looks like Keira Knightley. I definitely prefer the new one. No doubt about it. [Jamie]"

GEORGINA RENNOLDS

HELLO. YOU'RE A LADY
"Er... Yes."
DO YOU KNOW WHO LARA CROFT IS?
"Of course I know who Lara Croft is! Oh, that new one stands out a lot more... they've portrayed her character a lot more. She's got a nice face.She looks a bit like Alexia... whassername... oh, you know? Whassername?"
YES. ALEXIA WHASSERNAME. UM... THANKS.

CHRIS BAILEY

YOU MANAGE A GAMES SHOP, SO YOU MUST KNOW EVERYTHING
"The detail's much better, increased facial detail. It's classic PSone Vs new technology. The boobs are smaller...<laughs> the equipment looks good too <rapidly changing subject>. They're moving with the times."
CAN WE PRINT YOUR NAME AND PHOTO?
"Er... if you don't mention the bit about noticing her boobs."
NO. WE WON'T

JON POUND

JON POUND?
"Speaking."
YOU'VE GOT A LIFE-SIZE LARA CROFT IN YOUR HOUSE
<looks shocked> Er, it's in the hallway.
WHICH DO YOU LIKE?
"Will the game be better than last time? This looks a lot better... not as silly as the old one."
LIKE THE ONE YOU KEEP IN YOUR HOUSE, JON?
"Y'know, she was silly. In *places*. She's more human, a lot less cartoony. The face isn't an issue for me. It's all about the outfit."
RIIIIGHT...

NATALIE (NOT PICTURED) BONNI GILFOYLE, MARY KEY AND SIMMOINA ELLIS (L-R)

WHAT BETTER PLACE THAN THE KNICKER AISLE OF TOP SHOP TO DISCUSS LARA'S NEW LOOK? WHAT DO YOU RECKON THEN?
"Oh, she's better, much more realistic. She's a lot trendier compared to the last one. She looks like... er, y'know... that Titanic girl..."
KATE WINSLET?
"That's it!" [Nathalie] "NO!" [Bonni] "She looks more like... whassername... er... the one going out with Brad Pitt... with big lips and pale skin."
PETE BURNS?
"That's it." <we're suddenly influxed by ladies> "Let's have a look. She's ten times better than the old one. She's got a belly button and everything."
WELL SPOTTED. WE HADN'T NOTICED THAT
<Cue ceaseless wittering> "She's much sexier, with a prettier face. OOH! See her top's neckline? <points to collarbone> That's a very sexy look. Men like that. I like all the gadgets, too. BLOODY HELL! She's even got dark eyeliner now. But those thighs need sorting out. <cue ten minute debate about sensible ratio of thigh to calf width> She looks like Kate Winslet." [Simmoina] "SHUT UP! No, she doesn't. It's Angelina Jolie." [Bonni] "She's much sexier now, they just need to sort her thighs out. <our eyes roll> You can't have 'thin' there and 'fat' there."
WE THINK IT LOOKS A BIT LIKE BILLIE PIPER?
"BOLLOCKS! <waits two seconds> Oh, actually... by the eyes... SHE LOOKS A LOT LIKE BILLE PIPER!" [Simmoina] Look at her! <points at Classic Lara> I used to think she was hot, but she looked awful!"

STOP PRESS!

"FIRST SHOT"
NEED FOR SPEED: MOST WANTED

Yes, here it is. The first shot of the new Need For Speed game from EA - a typically pre-rendered shot of a BMW M5 with a fin on it. Looks great and we've been told by an insider that it "takes modding to the next level" with "the most radical bodyshop ever seen in a videogame". Now you're able to effectively strip down your car to it's naked components and rebuild it as you see fit. Suddenly you're no longer limited to a menu-driven choice of pre-set options. Sounds amazing. Lots more soon.

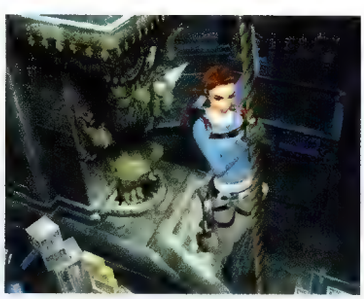
"IT'S ALL GONE GENE WILDER"
SSX4... IT'S ON SKIS

We've *loved SSX* series since PSM2#03 – an era so distant Staff Writer Andy still thought Teletubbies was a documentary - so it's with mixed feelings that we ogle the first shots of *SSX4*. Yes... on skis. It's like the official Liverpool football game having a 'Cheer for Everton' bonus mode. On the bright side, the snowboard stuff's still in there, and the <wheeze> skiing sections will focus on speed - echoing the intensity of *Burnout*. There'll be ski specific bails, grabs and Monster tricks, plus a long awaited create-a-character mode. We know our fear of skis is irrational – a lot of the freestyle riders are sensational – but surely the whole *point* of snowboarding is sticking it to those neon-wearing aristos?

FIRST SCREENSHOTS – HIT OR MISS?

Eidos react to PSM2's 'Save Our Lara' campaign and make some changes...

Judging by these screenshots, Lara is going back to her roots. The streets and alleyways have been ditched in favour of good-old-fashioned tombs, they look grand in scale (which could indicate a return to the graceful hopping and jumping gameplay) and everything points to a return-to-form for the series.



PSM RECKONS

So there you have it – a 100% victory for 'New' Lara. Here's hoping they can make the game just as gorgeous. Loads more shots next month.

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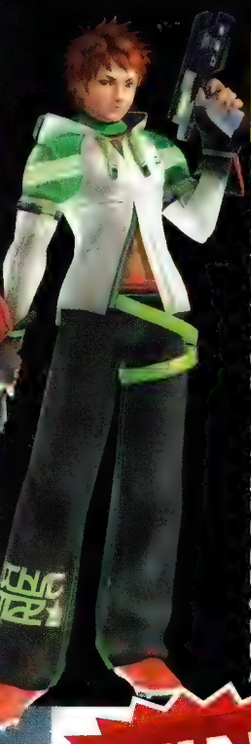
PHANTASY STAR™ UNIVERSE

ファンタシースターユニバース

Could Sega's *Phantasy Star Universe* be the best online RPG on PS2? We think so, if its Dreamcast predecessor is anything to go by at least.



Imagine this: you're in a forest, chatting to some bloke about your new level seven sniper rifle. "No way, man! Such a weapon doesn't exist!" he cries. Smugly, you open your inventory and give the bloke the rifle to have a look. Then he *runs away*. What follows is an *hour long* chase through the forest as you pursue the thief, typing "Give it back!" and weeping. Believe it or not, this actually happened to PSM2 contributor Jes Bickham in the fantastic Dreamcast online RPG, *Phantasy Star Online* – and the good news? A sequel is coming to PS2 and it'll be the best interweb-based-role-player on the system.

Better yet, if you've yet to get your PS2 online there's a fully-fledged single player mode to get stuck into, featuring a promised 40 hours of gameplay. Back to the online stuff, new features include vehicles meaning you no longer have to bound around on foot, along with three new planets, more than 20 dungeons and 15 new bosses. As before, you and a group of (real life) compadres can form a party and work through the game together, unlocking new items, levelling up and exploring the game world. Like *Final Fantasy XI*, the game promotes teamwork and friendliness, so there won't be any high level troublemakers killing you every four seconds. Watch out for rifle thieves, though, eh?

PSM RECKONS *Sonic Team have crafted an ever-growing, evolving world that will change and develop through the years with downloadable content and updates. If the combat is as well-designed and enjoyable as its Dreamcast predecessor, this should* rock hard. *If you haven't already, get your PS2 online in preparation for this beauty.*

WIN! AMAZING REMOTE CONTROL TANKS!

They shoot. They spin. They drive. And have emotions like real people* Win these tiny terrors and 10 copies of *Brothers in Arms* courtesy of Ubisoft.

* We're still testing that bit.

Don't laugh. These tiny remote control tanks are the work of scientific genius. They might be the size of a small rubber, or angry radioactive bees, but they can shoot each other with tiny infra-red beams and drive around. Backwards. Forwards. And round-and-round. Never mind that we find a cure for the common cold, eh? This is why God *invented* science.

Seriously, mind, they're a lot of fun and we've got FOUR to give away to you and your posse plus ten copies of the excellent *Brothers in Arms: Road to Hill 30* (which scored 82% in PSM2#60) PLUS one limited edition shiny box set courtesy of our chums at Ubisoft if you can answer this simple question:

Where can you park a tank?

1) In residential areas between the hours of 1800 and 0500.
2) In municipal car parks if you pay £7.50 an hour.
3) Anywhere you like, it's a tank.

Answers on a postcard to:
'You can park a tank anywhere', PSM2 Magazine, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW. No correspondence will be entered into, as always.

Out on the lonely battlefield of love...
It's so lonely out here. I just need a little love. Just a little... wait a minute!
Well hello, sexy. What's a nice tank like you doing in a...
Finally those salsa lessons begin to pay off...
[oof] Could you move your turret? I'm getting cramp.
Come on baby, it's OK. I'm firing blanks.
I've got some bad news. I'm a man.

"THE LONGEST DAY OF YOUR LIFE"

24: The Game: Sony's smash hit for 2005 breaks cover.

As previously reported in PSM2, Sony's BIG 2005 game is a PS2 interpretation of the hit series 24. It's a third-person game borrowing all the show's acting and writing talents and Sony Studio Cambridge, creators of the gorgeous-looking (but flawed) *Primal* are at the controls.

Naturally you play as Jack Bauer, the world's unluckiest man, and experience 24 hours in the shoes of grim-faced Kiefer Sutherland in a new story set between the events of second and third 24 TV series. And, while 24 levels each one real-time hour long seems an obvious game structure to us, we're told that the game will feature over 100 separate missions, told through branching sub-plots perfectly copying the show's lots-of-action-in-lots-of-different-places format.

Vital to the 24 experience will be multiple camera angles showing what's unfolding in one window while you continue playing in another. And it's not all on-foot corridor plodding either. Not only do you get to roam (and destroy) chunks of a 'real' LA but there are driving and car-chase scenes too.

Additionally there are even interrogation moments where, by monitoring the lie-detector readouts from your victim (er, we mean subject) you choose your questions and time their delivery in order to break them and cough up the info you need. Plus lots of surveilance gadgets to fiddle with too.

PSM RECKONS *It looks as though it's got the lot and the secrecy surrounding the title supports Sony insider claims that this is THE BIG title to take PS2 through to Christmas 2005. Sony Cambridge are a smart bunch and while their games are incredibly polished (Ghost Hunter, Primal, Medievil) they've lacked the solid, street-level subject matter to let them really craft a smash hit. 24 is the licence they finally deserve and PSM2 will be the first mag to play the game in our exclusive hands-on next month.*

TOP SECRET!

Think you know all there is to know about 24?... BOLLOCKS! Good job that *24: The Game* answers the following previously unanswered questions:

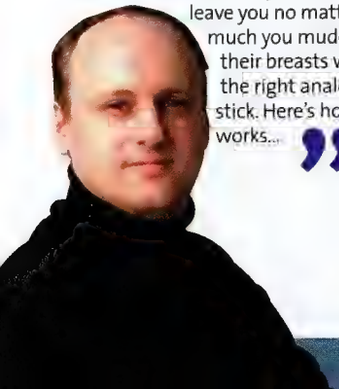
Who was really behind the assassination attempt on President Palmer?
How did the highly attractive Kim Bauer land a job in the L.A. CTU?
How did Jack Bauer and Chase Edmunds first start working together?
Just who's digital alarm clock is it anyway?*

*No. That one's a lie.

'MAKING THE SEXY' WITH FAHRENHEIT!

Amazing new control system changes games FOREVER! Possibly...

"Bonjour. I'm David Cage – designer of videogames and seducer of women. My new game, *Fahrenheit*, uses a unique 'interaction' system that lets you manipulate the environment in real-time using the analogue stick. It also lets you, how you say, 'make with the sexy' with beautiful videogame women – and the best bit? They'll *never* leave you no matter much you muddle their breasts with the right analogue stick. Here's how it works..."



HIDING BODIES:
"Nudge the stick downwards towards the body and then pull it upwards gently. To drag the corpse along, alternate between the R1 and L1 buttons. *Fahrenheit*'s plot is full of intrigue, mystery and murders galore, so expect to do this more than once."

STABBING PEOPLE:
"This is just one example, but if you're standing over someone, pull the stick back slowly and downwards quickly and sharply to bring your weapon down in a stabbing motion. It's like *Tiger Woods*, only far more violent. And with knives."

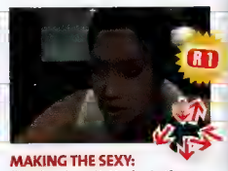
STEALING THINGS:
"If you're being chased by a rozzer and you need to make a quick getaway, find yourself a car or place to hide – if the door's locked, you'll need to wiggle the analogue stick to jimmy the lock and get inside. Think *Splinter Cell*, only less complicated."

OPENING DOORS:
"Push the analogue a quarter-circle forward or a quarter-circle back, depending on the door. Why not try stepping through the door, pressing L3 to break wind then, by flapping the door back and forth, waft the guff inside before slamming it shut and trapping it inside. Ha ha!"

CHOKING OLD LADIES:
"Click R3 to wiggle your fingers menacingly, slowly push the stick forward and strangle the old bint. With the other stick, raise your foot to stand on the cat's neck. Then, with a flick of the stick hoik it through the bathroom door for a splashdown in the khazi."

EATING FOOD:
"Pull the stick back to raise your fork in the air, thrust it downwards to pierce your medium-rare steak, rise it up again gently towards your mouth and then wiggle to chew. If your wiggles aren't fast enough, you'll choke. And probably die."

SEDUCING WOMEN:
"You're having dinner with a beautiful woman. You're sharing a bottle of wine. You have to make a good impression if you're to 'score the mufty', yes? Use the left stick to gently pop on a Hot Chocolate LP and then use the left to wink and pout suggestively."



MAKING THE SEXY:
"You've done it. You're in there. Now, lightly flick the left analogue stick to tease her, then turn the right a quarter-circle forward to cup her bits. Next, slowly push both sticks in to move towards her thatch. Then simply bash away with R1."

Accelerator extra

Tiny last-minute shots of BIG importance

JAK X: COMBAT RACING

►Obviously inspired by *Renegade*'s excellent driving sections, Naughty Dog are releasing a 'combat racing' game based around the *Jak* universe. Expect to play as characters including Jak, Daxter, Keira and Sig and race through familiar locations like Haven City Kart racers. Don't you love 'em?

HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE

►Oh no! Harry Potter has been selected as a competitor in the dangerous Triwizard Tournament. Yes. EA are releasing a game based around the forthcoming Potter book/movie/lunchbox and, as ever, it looks ruddy spectacular. Visually, anyway.

THE REGIMENT

►Based around the exploits of the SAS, this strategy FPS looks like *Rainbow Six* with cock-er-nies. It's set in London, so expect to be shooting your way through the tube, piss-stained back alleys and even the Houses of Parliament, protecting politicians from nasty blokes.

CHRONICLES OF NARNIA

►Based on the live action/CG version of the classic fairytale due to hit cinemas this Christmas, *Narnia* is an action/aventure game being developed by *Lego Star Wars* creators Traveller's Tales. Only two screenshots have been released but it looks very pretty indeed.

AEON FLUX

►Classic early '90s cartoon Aeon Flux is getting the movie treatment later this year and, naturally, they're releasing a tie-in videogame alongside it. Details are thin, but if the TV series is anything to go by expect guns, girls and lots of death.

Accelerator

SCANDALOUS GOSSIP. INSIDER DIRT. ZERO BULLSHIT

ALL THE ACTION FROM THE OFFICIAL PES LEAGUE. ONLY IN PSM2

DIRTY DUBLINER: The red-shirted man is the dirtiest player in the league. Apparently.

CHAMPION'S ELECT: Stephen Clegg, last year's champ (left) with challenger Cormac Malone.

DUBLIN IN SIZE: A great turnout, once again.

VENUE 1: LIFFEY VALLEY SHOPPING CENTRE, DUBLIN
DATE: 9 APRIL 2005

"THE DIRTIEST PLAYER IN THE LEAGUE!"

Dirty tactics scrape a 1-0 victory with just nine men.

Fouling pays. Just ask John Merriman of Dublin's *PES* league. Described by fellow league compatriot, James Breen, as the "dirtiest player in the league," John 'The Hatchet' Merriman's Holland side kicked lumps out of Cathal Doyle's France for 90 minutes. After displaying the sort of dirty tactics applied in prison football, Merriman sneaked an injury time stinger that saw him secure a 1-0 result and his first victory of the season.

It wasn't all about the shoeing though. There was plenty of skill on display, especially from last year's reigning champ, Stephen Clegg.

Steve is sat atop the Dublin league with an impressive 13 victories from 17 games. Judging by the tenacious way he pulled his Czech Republic side back from two goals down to secure a thrilling 4-4 draw against Cormac Malone's Portugal, we're sure he can win the whole thing again.

Meanwhile, there was a lesson in dribbling. The tutors were Wai Kit Chan and his Samba jigging Brazilians. Ian Rennick's Dutch side were the unwilling students, as they chased shadows around their six-yard box. Two delicate slide-rule passes and a coolly converted penalty later, and Chan's side were cruising to a 3-0 victory.

There's still a long way to go, and with over half the season left to play, we're sure there'll be plenty more twists and turns. But there's already been enough excitement to have Dublin's *PES*-ers in desperate need of a nice lie down.

VENUE 2: STARQUEST, LIVERPOOL
DATE: 9 APRIL 2005

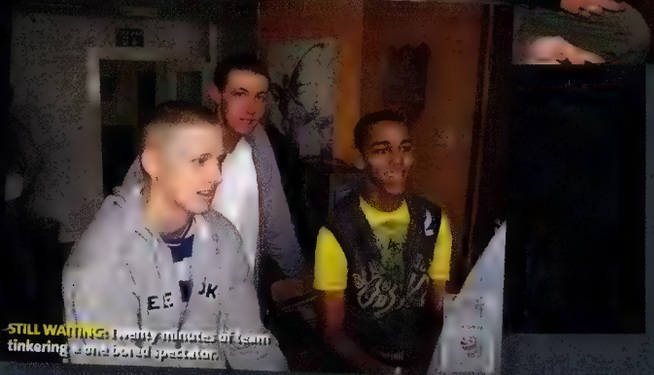
PES PLAYER IN "I'M RUBBISH" SHOCKER

Intense rivalry. Needless fouls. 11-2 massacres. All in a day's work for the players of the Liverpool league.

Top honours should go to Tom McDowall (Played six, won five), who romped his last game 11-2 – a gargantuan score over ten minutes – but the star of the show was Richard Taylor. After failing to win a single game during the last three meetings – think about that for a second – he bounced back to claim his first scalp. Good work, fella.

Liverpool league stalwarts – and all round nice blokes – James and Stephen Hoult share Richard's self-effacing humour. "I don't make excuses, I'm just rubbish," explains Stephen, temporarily finding himself trapped in the body of Quinton Fortune after Man Utd's 2-0 defeat to Norwich. James even managed to have more men taking early baths than goals scored all day. Big shouts, as always, to the league's big guns who are hotly contesting the top of the table – Rob Johnson, Lee Henshall, Rob Price, Michael Walsh (the most successful/second person to leave Blackburn since Alan Shearer), Paul Gastor and Tahir Hussain, plus everyone who makes the Liverpool league such a success. (Cheers to ref Mark Whitehead for his stirling referee work, by the way.)

TAKING OUT THE TRASH: Stephen Hoult (Left) confesses he's rubbish.



STILL WAITING: Twenty minutes of team tinkering = one bored spectator.

PES LEAGUES

WHAT IS THE PES LEAGUE?

So, um, what is the *PES* league?
It's a national league competition, which is sponsored by PSM2 and played on Konami's *Pro Evolution Soccer 4*. Every year it unearths the finest crop of *PES* players in the UK and pits them against each other to find the ultimate champion.

What can I win?
Well, if you get to the final, you're in with a chance of winning £500. Not only that, you also get an all-expenses paid trip abroad to take on Europe's finest players. Plus you get to meet PSM2. Too.

Where is the *PES* league held?
There are venues across the UK. Take a look at the table on the right for a full list.

How can I enter?
Erm... you can't. Registration closed on April 7th, but there's always next year's competition.

PLAYER OF THE MONTH

Each month, a top player shares his winning *PES* secrets.

This Month:
Grant Barter
League:
Bluewater

Favourite Team?
"Brazil (Arsenal in real life)."

Formation?
"I use a modified 4-4-2 formation."

Tactics?
"As Brazil, defending was obviously not my highest priority. I use a flat back four with Emerson and Gilberto sat just in front, Ze Roberto on the left wing and Ronaldinho or Kaka just behind the front two. I tend to go all out attack to finish the game as soon as possible. I don't like to let players back in the game through little errors at the back. I pass the ball around in my opponents half to find an opening rather than dribble past. It's a style I've always used and it works."

Secrets?
"I tend to use super cancel to cut out through balls, and bend my runs for crosses to get in a better position for headers. My defensive midfielders are used to cut out attacks, I use a SB/WF with good dribble accuracy, and I use a player (OMF) just behind the front two with good dribbling and speed, but who can also find the perfect pass to the forwards. My front two have good shot accuracy and play on a certain side of the field so it's easier to score. Adriano is left footed, so I put him on the right side – so when he shoots, the ball curves to the right and, usually, ends up in the net."

Last word?
"I keep my ID badge from last year's event in my pocket. It sounds mad, but when I was watching the Olympics last year there was a guy wearing a wristband from the Sydney games to remind him of his failure – and he went on to win a gold medal in Greece."

PSM2 + KONAMI

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER nationalleague

04 05

pesleague.co.uk

VENUE 4: GLOBAL GAMING AREA, BIRMINGHAM
DATE: 2 APRIL 2005

"MILES OUT IN FRONT"

Reigning Champ is on top form.

"PHWEEP!" Drum's ref Mark Farrington. Respect.

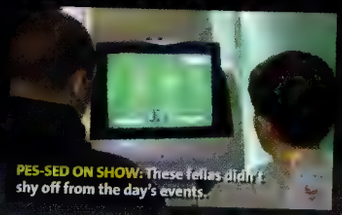
It may be a brand new season on a brand new *PES*, but things are looking decidedly similar to last year. For starters, reigning champ Richard Marsh is cruising at the top of the league. He's now won 14 out of 15 games with his England side. The defeat to Leon Kendrick now seems like a distant memory. But Rhys Bowen isn't far behind, and continued his good form, before having his undefeated run brought to an end. Referee Matt Barr also served up some quality results, which now places him fourth in the league. Good work lads, things are really shaping up well.

VENUE 4: HOUSE OF CARDS, EDINBURGH
DATE: 19 MARCH 2005

FORUM FRACAS PROMPTS NO SHOW

Possible mind games in Edinburgh dwarfed by awesome 12-goal thriller.

There was controversty when the Stewart Bros failing to show up after some 'interesting' exchanges on the pesfan.com forum. Mind games? Still, the day was lit up by the ding-dong match between Daniel McIntosh (France) and John Keddie (Czech Republic), ending 7-5 to canny Keddie. Player of the month is Mark Gardiner, with four wins and a draw, nudging key favourites like Daniel Carnie, Gary McIntosh, Vito Simeone and Stuart Cronin.


PES-SED ON SHOW: These fellas didn't shy off from the day's events.

EXTRA TIME

Selected highlights from the rest of the league's action.

1. Well done to Marcus Allen of the Bluewater league who destroyed Ian Jones' resilient England side 7-2 with his in form Brazilians.

2. If there was a prize for sticking to your gameplan, then it has to go to Ian Rennick, who persisted with his Dutch wing attacks even though it had absolutely no effect on Wai Kit Chan's Brazil.

3. After seven fruitless games, Perry Garland of the Brighton league finally popped his cherry chalked up his first victory, before causing the upset of the day – beating the in-form Miguel Ruiz 5-3.

4. A special mention has to go out to the bloke's girlfriend who sat around patiently while her other half went about his *PES* business in the Belfast league.

5. 100% records are few and far between, but Simon Webbe made it look easy with his French team remaining undefeated during the last *PES* league meeting.

6. Graham Jarvis, the referee of the Southend league, should stick to officiating after losing six matches and drawing one. We're sure your luck will change soon.

7. Jemal Sylvester of the London league has to be the unluckiest player of the month. Even after scoring five goals, he still managed to lose 6-5 to Rehan Raja.

8. The temptation to go lazing on the sunny beach of Bournemouth wasn't enough to deter nine pasty-skinned fellas from turning up to the latest *PES* fixtures. That's dedication for you.

9. Not only is John Merriman the 'dirtiest player' in the Dublin league, he's also the owner of one the swearest gobs ever. Winning or losing, he's all about the swearing. We hope you don't kiss your mother with that mouth.

10. Last, but by no means least, a special thanks goes out to all the league referee's who are keeping this year's tournament ticking over nicely. Keep up the good work, fellas. We appreciate it.

PES'S PREMIER PLAYERS

Who's at the top of the *PES* league in your area? Find out with this stout column

Grant Barter – Brazil
Played 12, Won 7, Drawn 2, Lost 3, Points 23

Stephen Clegg – Czech Republic
Played 17, Won 13, Drawn 3, Lost 1, Points 42

Lee Price – Netherlands
Played 14, Won 11, Drawn 1, Lost 2, Points 34

Fab Cassandro – Brazil
Played 13, Won 11, Drawn 0, Lost 2, Points 33

COMING SOON

Matthew O'Neill – Brazil
Played 10, Won 8, Drawn 2, Lost 0, Points 26

Kris Ogiri – Brazil
Played 10, Won 8, Drawn 0, Lost 2, Points 24

COMING SOON

Vishnu Papineni – England
Played 13, Won 11, Drawn 1, Lost 1, Points 34

COMING SOON

Perry Bell – Brazil
Played 13, Won 11, Drawn 2, Lost 0, Points 35

Daniel Carnie – France
Played 14, Won 11, Drawn 1, Lost 2, Points 34

Nolan Dickman – Brazil
Played 13, Won 11, Drawn 1, Lost 1, Points 34

Richard Marsh – England
Played 15, Won 14, Drawn 0, Lost 1, Points 42

Shui Ip – France
Played 13, Won 10, Drawn 2, Lost 1, Points 32

Vikash Kapoor – Brazil
Played 7, Won 6, Drawn 0, Lost 1, Points 18

Tevin Sithanen – Brazil
Played 9, Won 7, Drawn 1, Lost 1, Points 22

KONAMI

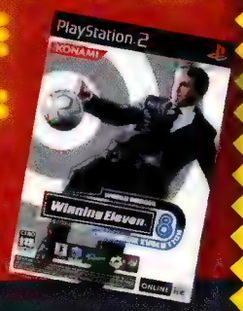
Accelerator

SCANDALOUS GOSSIP. INSIDER DIRT. ZERO BULLSHIT

REVEALED

FIVE STEPS CLOSER TO PRO EVO 5

To celebrate the Japanese release of the new *Winning Eleven 8: Liveware Evolution* (think of it as *PES4.5*) we highlight the key changes and how they'll influence *PES5*.



1 NEW ONE-ON-ONE SHOTS

Shooting generally feels snappier – we were amazed by Ruud Van Nistelrooy's ability to snap out shots in the box with relatively little repositioning – but the big addition is faking powerful drives. Press ◎ to shoot, release, then instantly press L1 to change your body shape and lift the ball daintily over the keeper.

3 ONLINE PLAY

Well, in theory. The Japanese are enjoying online league games of *WE8: LE*, but it's currently impossible to join their games from the UK – the Japanese are using a dedicated server. On the bright side, it means online play is practically *assured* for *PES5*. We'd like LAN play too, please, Konami.

2 NEW PLAYER-SPECIFIC ANIMATIONS

PES4 Producer Seabass has been banging on about player-specific animations for ages, like the way Pires shuffles like a crab, or Beckham lines up a free kick. *WE8: LE* goes a step closer with new incidental animations, like player's flapping their arms during jostles, diving comically and – check the sequence here – player's mis-kicking the ball and falling on their bum in tears. The more you play, the more you spot – from new flick overs, to exaggerated step-over turns. It's all here. Brilliant

PLAYER WATCH... WITH DAVID BECKHAM

Talk to David Beckham! Know what I mean? Since he changes his hair more often than Lauren changes guards, it's better to illustrate the changes in players' looks between *WE8: LE* and *PES4*! Know what I mean? Actually, to be honest, there have been hardly any changes in the way players appear, so I've phoned Gary Neville and he told me a funny trick to play. Wayne Rooney is limping, too. Can you see what it is? I'll think Victoria weeks."

WHERE CAN I BUY IT?

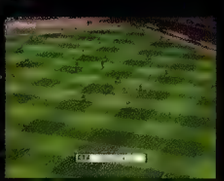
Only in Japan, but you can import it from online retailers (using a quick Google search) for about £60. Careful, mind, you'll need a (relatively) expensive and quite illegal chipped PS2 – so wait for *PES5* if you possibly can. So is it worth it if you've got the gear and the cash? If you love *PES* like us. Shit, yes.

4 INCREASED PLAYER PHYSICALITY

Player dimensions are greatly exaggerated over *PES4*, so a brute like Adriano can smash through two weaker defenders when he's built up a head of steam. Heavy players take even longer to stop when running, emphasising the dribbling abilities of players like Di Vaio and Henry.

5 NEW OFFSIDE INDICATOR

Simple, but effective, the yellow arrows flashes red at the moment the ball is played to clear up any debates. Nicer menus, too.



HOW TO DO A FLIK FLAK... WITH RONALDINHO

"Hello, Ronnie here. You may remember me from *another* company's urban footy game where I was inexplicably decorated with rainbow spray, but... Anyways, *WE8:LE* is the first game to let you do my signature 'flik flak' move, where I flick the ball one way, then the other, with the same foot. It's well skill."

RIGHT STUFF: Quickly tap R2 (x3) to make Ronnie flick out his right leg...

SPHERE WE GO: ...he'll push the ball right out and catch the defender's attention...

FLICKY GERVAIS: ... before suddenly flicking the ball back on the same foot...

GANGSTER WRAP: ... returning to his original position in the blink of an eye...

FOOL'S GOAD: ... making the opposing defender look like a right old cretin.

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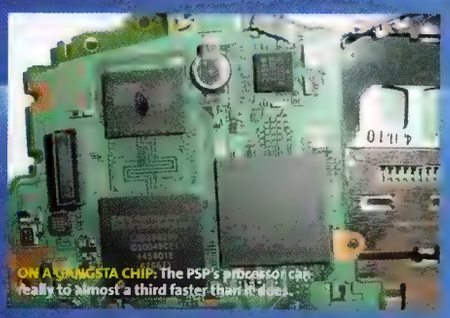
Accelerator

28 SPIDER-MAN 2
One of our favourite PS2 games gets a PSP remake, but does it make our spider sense tingle? Or is it a load of old (web) toss(ing)?

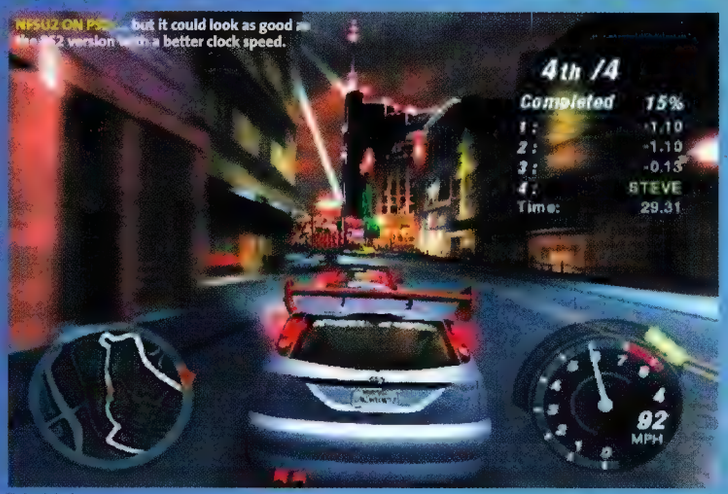
29 MERCURY
This long-awaited puzzler turns out to be one of our favourite games on PSP so far. It's simple, it's addictive and it's so hard you'll weep.

30 WIPEOUT PURE
The PlayStation favourite goes all tiny and hits handheld land, but does it survive the translation? Read our review and find out.

Your PSP's battery is easily pop-outable. Not only will you be able to buy newer, better units in the future but it's obviously a breeze for Sony to implement a new one in the box.


ON A GANGSTA CHIP: The PSP's processor can really to almost a third faster than it does...

NFSU: RIVALS Right now *Need For Speed* looks like this on PSP...



NFSU2 ON PS2... but it could look as good as the PS2 version with a better clock speed.

PSP'S SECRET POWER!

Just when you thought Sony's handheld gem couldn't get any better, we go and find out that PSP has been lying to us all along. You might want to sit down.

OK, we already knew the PSP was great, but we didn't realise just how much potential it has. This tiny piece of hardware is more powerful than PS2. Seriously, it is. Still don't believe us, eh? Well, let's hit you with the facts.

According to a developer – who would only talk to us through a veil to disguise his identity – "The PSP is currently running at a lower processor speed than it's capable of – 222Mhz to be exact." He went on: "Sony have restricted it to this speed because it saves on the battery life."

Seems that, fearful of battery life criticism early on they made developers lock the chip at a lower speed rather than letting it run free and sap vital hours playtime. Thing is, as Sony develop new, better batteries this won't be an issue in the future. Games will be able to take advantage of hidden, extra oomph and be – potentially – even better than PS2.

Your PS2's chip runs at 294.912MHz. PSP can – we're told – run right up to 333Mhz if the software will let it. Imagine a hand-held machine that has the possibility to iron out the animation problems in *PES4* or to run *Need For Speed Underground 2* at 'better-than-PS2' quality. Brilliant.

Basically, 30% of the PSP's processing power is lying dormant, waiting for a battery powerful enough to handle it. In the future, if Sony decide to release a battery with greater capacity, games on PSP will be able to compromise the newer, longer battery life in favour of higher chip clock-speed. The choice is up to them – as soon as Sony deliver the new battery and change the rules for developers to let them mess with the machine to the max.

PSM RECKONS *This is all very exciting. There's even the distinct possibility that when the PSP is launched here, it'll come with a stronger battery, which means better-looking games are just around the corner. Hopefully, Sony won't keep a latch on the max processor settings for too long.*

//THE PSP TURNS OUT TO BE MORE POWERFUL THAN PS2. SERIOUSLY, IT REALLY IS//

SNOOKER LOOPY

Sega are pushing *World Snooker Challenge 2005* to the front of the cue. A ha ha. The game's being developed by the team behind *World Snooker Championship* on PS2, Blade Interactive, and features the compulsory Wi-Fi link-up games. But they've forgotten to allow linked-up pool matches, only snooker. Why? We don't know, but we'll chalk up the truth in next month's full review.

PURSUIT FORCE LEAPS ONTO PSP – AND THIS AIN'T TRIVIAL

A trivial pursuit, see? Forget it. Sony's cop racer lets you jack cars, leap into motors and dodge bullets at 150kmh.

Dangling off the bumper of an SUV dodging Uzi fire into a stream of incoming traffic. That's the premise of Sony's *Pursuit Force* – placing you into high-speed police pursuits on the sun-streaked freeways of West Coast USA.

Beware. This isn't *Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*. It's a linear arcade racer fusing *Ridge Racer*'s twitchy steering to the rolling cityscape of *Need For Speed Underground 2*. You play a cheeseball LA cop who'll stop at nothing to get his man, from jumping from open-top sports cars onto speeding motorbikes to hanging off an enemy's bonnet dodging bullets.

Shots are auto-targeting to emphasise driving skills, with the action switching to a close-combat mode when you carjack a gangster's ride – it's possible to steal *any* vehicle on the road. Dumb as it sounds, depth is provided by the variety of weapons and vehicles – each requiring unique tactics and combinations to jack at high speed, murdering – and all in the palm of your hand. Brilliant.

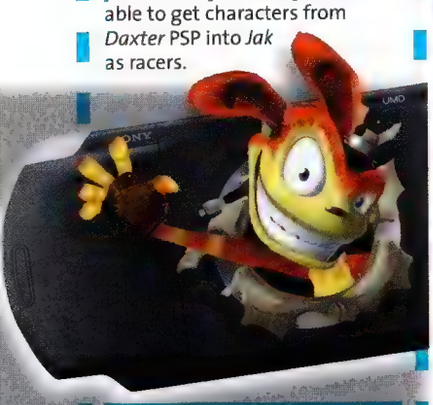
PSM RECKONS *Visually, it's easily a match for* Ridge Racer, *with an impressive number of vehicles clogging the freeway. It's relatively simple stuff, so the key lies in the vehicle balancing and track design – if Sony get it right, this could be perfect for dip-in, tune-out blasts. Hands-on truth next month.*

DRIVE LEAPER: The game's selling point is the ability to jump between vehicles.

BACK IN DAX(TER)

Jak's tiny mate gets his own PSP adventure.

While Jak hits the track in PS2 racing title *Jak X*, his mouthy sidekick Daxter is getting his own PSP game, tentatively titled, er... *Daxter*. Details about the actual content of the game are slim, but developer Ready At Dawn's website labels it as an 'action/adventure' – could this be PSP's first platformer? There's also word that the game will link up with *Jak X*, so that if you've got both games and connect your PSP to your PS2, you'll be able to get characters from *Daxter* PSP into *Jak* as racers.



US SALES – AN UPDATE

As the PSP's honeymoon period begins to subside in the US, figures are painting an interesting picture. There were one million units available in the US upon launch, but only six hundred thousand PSPs were snapped up between the launch on 24th March to the 31st. On the plus side, their own *Twisted Metal: Head-On* was the number one-selling PSP title, beating off *NFSU: Rivals* and *THUG2: Remix*. What does this mean for us? Nothing. It just reinforces our opinion that most US gamers are ungrateful, as we know plenty of UK players that'd strangle their grandparents to get their hands on a PSP.

EA'S GAMING MANIFESTO

Top publisher unleashes its load...

OK, so it was inevitable that EA were going to drop a glut of sports franchises onto the PSP (*FIFA*, *Tiger Woods*, etc). But as they prepare to unveil their 2005 PS2 line-up at E3, expect to see a few of these newer titles making the crossover to PSP. We can confirm that *SSX4* (which will feature skiers), *The Godfather* (which Francis Ford Coppola hates) and *Burnout* (which will be made by EA's Team Fusion and will be a 'best of' compilation from all three PS2 incarnations) are all due to make a welcome debut on Sony's handheld, along with *From Russia With Love*, the new *Harry Potter* and *Dead To Rights 2*. Great stuff.

THE PRICE IS... WELL, WHO KNOWS, REALLY?

COME ON – JUST HOW MUCH IS IT?

Yes, it's that time again – the part of the mag where we tell you that Sony have still to reveal the UK price of the PSP. But there's good news! Yes, actual good news. Just as we're going to press, the final price MAY have just surfaced thanks toi Dixons and *Radio 1* (?!) announcing a price of £179 – which is absolutely brilliant news if it's true. Current estimations to the UK release date are at 3rd of June (Dixons and um... Jo Whiley) and 24th June (Amazon.co.uk). Whatever the truth we'll have all the news in our next issue.

The MON£¥ $HOT

Spidey looks sweet on PSP, and the (ahem) light rimming effects make him stand out like the big, bold superhero he is. Beautiful.

SPIDER-MAN 2

A portable version of the PS2 version of *Spidey 2* would've been amazing. If only, eh...?

Almost a full year after the release of the Spider-Man 2 film, Activision launch a PSP version onto the unsuspecting public. Now, it doesn't take a genius to work out why. It's because a) they wanted to get a foothold in the PSP market as soon as possible and b) they wanted to milk the teat of the webbed-wonder's movie popularity until it positively whistles with emptiness. We're all for the first reason, but the second is a certainly a bit of a cheek, given that what the developers have actually produced is a half-arsed effort in the extreme.

Vicarious Visions, the developers who brought us the delectable *Spider-Man 2* on PS2, have crapped on all their good work by ditching the innovative features that made Spidey's last outing so enjoyable. Web-swinging is no longer the pendulum physics affair it once was. Instead you hit L1 to unfurl the first length of web, and then wrestle with the analogue stick to steer him in your desired direction. And don't worry about ledges to grapple your webs onto – thin air will suffice. Brilliant, eh? No. And if you were expecting to have a tiny Manhattan in the palm of your hands to explore at your leisure, then think again. *Spider-Man 2* is on rails. Big, fat uninteresting rails. Blunder past eye-patch wearing (almost 2D) goons, swing around erratically for a bit and have a boss battle. And that's it.

This basically the first (not very good) PS2 *Spider-Man* game NOT the excellent *Spider-Man 2* movie game.

You get to go web-to-toe with three of Marvel's other creations – Vulture, Rhino and Shocker who offer a welcome alternative to the proceedings, and some of the scuffles you have with them are fun, like the one where you coax Rhino into bashing the walls of a warehouse so that it topples onto him. But these don't last forever – and aren't all that exciting anyway.

No joke, you can swing through the entire game in about three hours, and at a TBC forty quid, that's just not good enough. Yes, Spidey may look almost as good as his PS2 game, but this PSP version is lacking in atmosphere and totally disappoints. Most annoyingly, the developers haven't included *anything* new, instead simply opting to take *out* the best bits. If you're still hungry for web-slinging action go check out our *Ultimate Spider-Man* feature on page 36, because this PSP version is one spider that's been deservedly washed down the spout. **Nathan Irvine**

■ *Spidey 2 drops onto PSP for launch.*

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS

Developer: Vicarious Visions
Publisher: Activision
Players: 1
Memory Save: 155KB

GAMEFAX

Action/Adventure
Superhero
Official License
Easy

TRIVBURST

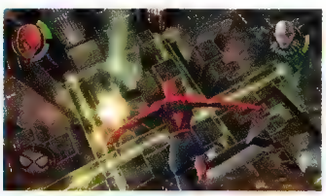
- Guide Spidey through 19 levels of web-slinging action.
- Voice-acting from the movie's actual cast.
- Upgrade your fighting and webbing skills.

PUBTALK

The smart arse thing to say down the boozer.
"We love Alfred Molina but as Dr Octopus? Who can forget the bit in Raiders where he says "Indy, throw me the idol!" Yup, that's 'im.

ARACHNID'S ARSENAL

Spidey has a limited amount of fighting skills to start off with, but thanks to the upgrade system, you can swap points for powers. Depending on how stylishly (with varied punch and kick combos) you smash through your foes, the more points you get. You can exchange this for super uppercuts, web nets and springier jumps.



PLUMMET OF STAWBERRIES: Spidey hurtles groundwards in a not-very-interesting way.

FIGHTING FIT: Beat these two with style to earn yourself some points and buy special moves.

PSM² VERDICT

GAMEPLAY	GRAPHICS	SOUND
+ The tempo of the action barely slips... – ...but the whole experience just feels empty and joyless.	+ Superb lighting effects and bold characters. – The camera doesn't always offer the best perspective.	+ The dramatic score from the film is delivered well. – Enemy dialogue shallower than a spider's nostril.

LIFESPAN

Once you've breezed through the very simple nineteen levels, unlockable art aside, there's almost no reason to come back.

MINUTES — YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
CHEWING A TARANTULA

IT'S WORSE THAN...
TONY HAWK'S REMIX

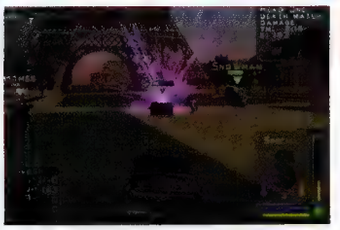
Thank god Vicarious Visions delivered the delectable *Spider-Man 2* on PS2 before this soulless dross. Treat this like an eight-legged creature on your wall and squash it flat.

5.0

The MON£¥ $HOT

A homing missile hurtles towards Angel, while Mr Grimm sits back, scythe ready to reap the souls of the victims. A bit macabre, really.

PSM2 BRONZE AWARD



INFOSTRIP

TWISTED METAL: HEAD ON

Car carnage in the palm of your hand.

DETAILS

Developer: Incognito Inc
Publisher: Sony
Players: 1-6
Memory Save: 166kb

GAMEFAX

Addictive · Stupid · Sequel · Network Play

We wonder what this game's release means for *Fired Up*, Sony's other PSP cars-with-guns title. Our early glance at that (PSM2#58) didn't show too much promise, whereas *Twisted Metal*, like its precursors on PS2 and PSone, is slick and rammed with attitude.

Presentation-wise, *Twisted Metal* can't be faulted. From the opening cel-shaded movie, through the menus to the actual in-game looks themselves, everything draws you in, even if the cars appear suspiciously like they're gliding over the surface rather than actually gripping the road. It's loaded with personality too, each character being vibrant, with their own distinct car (Angel, a beret-wearing French girl in a pink Cadillac; while Mr Grimm is Death himself, scythe and all, riding a massive motorbike and so on). Sounds familiar? This is the game that *invented* this genre after all. That's no excuse for it all being a bit repetitive though. It's the same experience from level to level – just blast the other cars away with your machine gun and special weapons (homing missiles, napalm bombs and a lot – but not enough – more. The locations vary, from the streets of Tokyo to hauling round the Louvre in Paris, but it affects the gameplay not one jot. The cars handle differently, but not enough to force a dramatic strategic rethink from vehicle to vehicle.

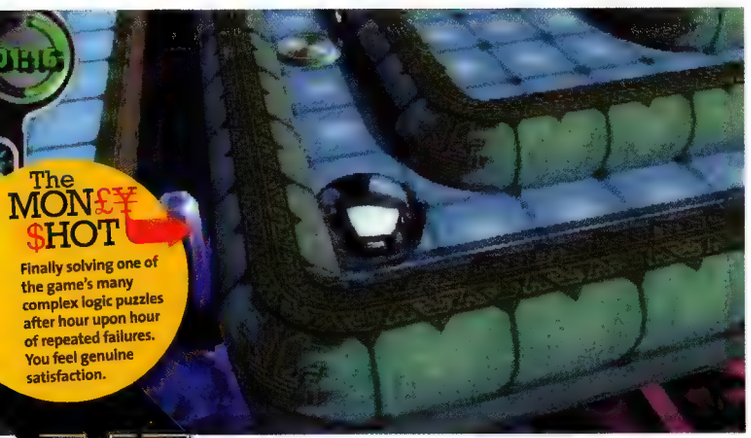
But handheld gaming is about quickfire bursts and *Twisted Metal* is perfectly suited to the format – fast, fun and aggressive. And six-player Wi-Fi mode is a riot. Worth the coppers. **David Cook**

■ *Twist metal on import now..*

PSM2 VERDICT

The first car-combat game on PSP is certainly an entertaining way to spend ten minutes before tea. Just don't expect to be playing it for hours at a time and you'll get along fine.

78



The MON£¥ $HOT

Finally solving one of the game's many complex logic puzzles after hour upon hour of repeated failures. You feel genuine satisfaction.

PSM2 SILVER AWARD

INFOSTRIP

MERCURY

The first must-have PSP puzzler.

DETAILS

Developer: Awesome Studios
Publisher: Ignition
Players: 1-2
Memory Save: 405kb

GAMEFAX

Original · Addictive · Hard · NetworkPlay

You know those Christmas cracker games where you guide a ball-bearing through a tiny plastic maze? *Mercury* is just like that, only the ball-bearing is an amorphous blob of liquid metal and the maze is a spinning, snaking rollercoaster covered in traps, spikes and lasers.

The concept, however, remains the same; get the blob from one end of the map to the other. You do this by nudging the analogue stick... and that's it. Simple. Uncomplicated. Just how a handheld game should be.

The physics are simply amazing. The blob slides, snakes, splits and slips realistically, catching reflections and making a satisfying 'glop' noise when it merges with another piece of mercury. It's a joy simply to nudge around and the levels themselves are varied to say the least. Ramps, conveyor belts, pits and other obstacles litter the path and must be navigated with precision, often as part of ingenious logic puzzles.

But therein lies *Mercury*'s flaw. Once you've sussed the levels out, that's it. It doesn't have a timeless quality such as *Tetris* (or even *Lumines*) and unless you've a friend to exchange high scores with, there's little incentive for replay. But while it lasts, it's an absolute joy. Each of the 72 levels presents a new problem, ranging from the simple (navigate a maze, reach the goal) to the downright inhuman (control multiple blobs at once, solve puzzles, avoid enemies, circle traps... all at once).

At its core, *Mercury* is a pure *videogame*, addictive, challenging and accessible to everyone but the thumbless. The lifespan may be questionable and some of the later levels may be simply *maddening*, but for however long it lasts, you'll be hooked. **Andy Kelly**

■ *Get Mercury imported now.*

PSM2 VERDICT

Impressive, beautifully simple and monstrously addictive – just don't expect it to last forever. Figuring the levels out is immensely rewarding, but when it's over it's over. Short-lived genius.

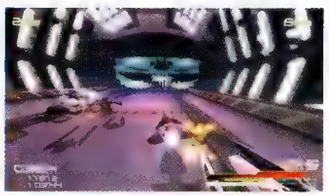
85

The MONEY SHOT

As the tournament mode goes on, courses get higher and higher until you're literally floating above the clouds. The graphics are *amazing*.

THESE ARE THE BRAKES

Like all of its predecessors, *WipEout Pure* uses a unique air brake system so as well as turning you also have to take leaning through corners into consideration. Initially it's confusing – you'll brake too much or too little and end up wedged between a wall and another racer – but as you get better at the game, so your skill increases with the brakes and you master the ability to powerslide around corners. If you're good, you can slide out of a missile's path too.



SLIDE REMARK: Bash off the edges too much and you'll blow up – best master the air brakes, eh?

HANG TIME: You can manoeuvre your craft in mid-air by flicking the air brakes on and off.

WIPEOUT PURE

Look, forget the dodgy versions ever happened. Take *Pure* as it is and enjoy one of the fastest, most enjoyable racers on PSP.

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS

Developer: Studio Liverpool
Publisher: Sony
Players: 1-8
Memory Save: 432kb

GAMEFAX

Racing
Addictive
Sequel
Hard

TRIVBURST

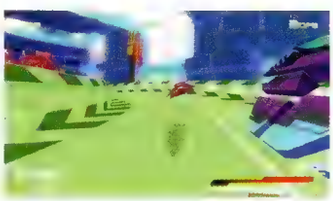
- Race against seven other players over wi-fi.
- Banging soundtrack specially sourced for the game by top DJs.
- Download extra circuits, music, ships and skins.

PUBTALK

The smart arse thing to say down the boozer.
"The Designers Republic - the people who give the *WipEout* games their unique look - have worked on every iteration of the series but *WipEout Fusion*. Wow, eh?"

PSP and *WipEout Pure* go beautifully together. Both are modern, polished and a gleaming example of how lucky we are to be gamers in the 21st century. From the stylish intro movie to the minimalist, modernistic menus to the game itself, everything feels fresh, contemporary and appropriate for the year 2005.

"Surely not?!" we hear you squawk. "Isn't it just a cynical and needless port of a PSone game from *eleven thousand years ago*?" Well, no, because, contrary to popular belief, *WipEout Pure* is a step forward for the series. Not a galaxy-lapsing surge into the unknown, but rather a convenient and timely hop into the realm of the handheld. You see, it's been tweaked for play on the move but still retains enough bulk and substance to appease those looking for something a little more substantial than the simple arcade thrills of *Ridge Racer*.



OK, so it's not *Gran Turismo* with spaceships, but there's lots to do and see along with downloadable content including new tracks, ships and music. There's also a couple of new game modes, including the immensely exciting 'Zone'. In this, you're plonked on a super-stylish track that looks like something out of Tron and propelled forward at increasingly rapid speeds. Your goal? Simply to survive. You go faster and faster, your points racking up, and you basically have to last until your energy bar depletes and you blow up – a brilliantly simple idea and endlessly playable.

After the travesty that was *WipEout Fusion* with its inexplicable glue-your-craft-to-the-track nonsense, *Pure* goes back to the old style of being detached and free. Not only does this mean you can fall off the track, but it also gives a greater impression of actually chucking a massive piece of floating metal around a futuristic rollercoaster. You feel in control of the craft and there's a greater sense of danger and immediacy – exactly what made the PSone versions of the game so hugely appealing to everyone.

Wireless play is also superbly executed. Up to eight people can duke it out over Wi-Fi though frame rate does suffer slightly. The weapons suit multiplay perfectly – leave trails of mines, fire heat-seeking missiles, drop bombs – and there's a smattering of other neat features, including an auto-pilot that nudges you around the track. Perfect for that corner that you can never master. If you're a fan of the *WipEout* series or simply appreciate a robust, well-designed game, *WipEout Pure* is pretty much an essential PSP purchase. **Andy Kelly**

■ *Import Pure now.*

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY	GRAPHICS	SOUND
+ Responsive handling and worth mastering. – Initially quite difficult. Will annoy rookies.	+ Amazing lighting effects and overall design. – Frame rate could be just a little better.	+ Excellent soundtrack complements the action. – If you can't stand electronic music, you've a problem.

LIFESPAN
If Sony can keep churning out downloadable content throughout the year, it should extend the lifespan considerably.
MINUTES — YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
NFSU: RIVALS

IT'S WORSE THAN...
RIDGE RACER

A paragon of good design. The depth of play and exquisite track design really show what PSP is capable of. A shame we've seen a lot of it before, but still a very worthy purchase indeed.

84

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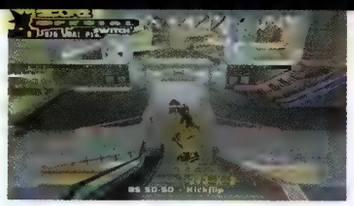
PlayStation.2 XBOX gusto bgs opta adidas eidos



The MON£Y $HOT
Watching your created character's stats slowly accumulate until he's a long-grindin', high-jumpin', fast-spinnin' powerhouse.

PSM2 SILVER AWARD

LINK FOR YOURSELF

Up to four people can play *Remix* via Wi-Fi. The games include classic *Hawk's* game HORSE, where players take turns to trick and win a letter. First person to make the word wins. It's as addictive as it ever was and you can, hilariously, change the word to whatever you want – we've enjoyed many a great game of FLAPS in the office.

HORSE HAIR: The best game, HORSE, works well over Wi-Fi – you become ultra competitive.

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND 2 REMIX

We can't help but feel that something has been lost in translation...

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS

Developer: Neversoft
Publisher: Activision
Players: 1-4
Memory Save: 346kb

GAMEFAX

Extreme Sports | Hard | Network Play | Sequel

TRIVBURST

- Play Wi-Fi multiplayer games with up to three other players, including favourites like HORSE and new additions including Combo Mambo and Slap.
- Two games in one – World Tour (story mode, basically) and Classic Mode (old *THPS*-style challenges).
- Use face mapping to attach your mug to a created character. Simply take a pic with a digicam and use a USB cable to save it to your stick.

PUBTALK

The smart arse thing to say down the boozer.
"Tony Hawk appeared in 1987's Police Academy 4: Citizens on Patrol as a skateboarding punk who upsets the smug-faced Captain Harris."

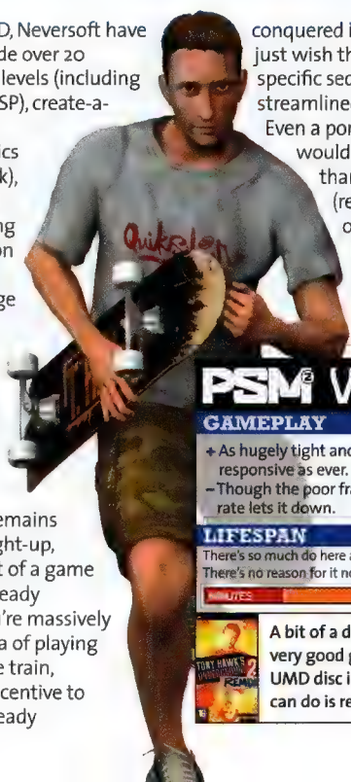
Playing *Tony Hawk's* on PSP feels strange. It looks the same, the content is the same but... well, maybe it isn't suited to such a small screen. We found ourselves literally squinting, trying desperately to find something to trick from in order to keep a line going, usually ending in a humiliating bail. It's also immensely fast, which should theoretically be good, but again it can make spotting things difficult – it's hard enough trying to manual across a tiny plank on a gargantuan 42" television, let alone a miniscule 480 by 272 screen the size of a Weetabix.

It's a port, you see. Rather than create a standalone game *for* PSP, Neversoft have 'remixed' the PS2 version of *THUG2* and, shamefully, 95% of the game remains exactly the same. Because of this, the frame rate is inconsistent – unforgivable considering how precise the game requires you to be – and the controls don't seem to complement the button layout.

It is, however, a technical marvel – in one 1.8gb UMD, Neversoft have managed to include over 20 skaters, around 18 levels (including two exclusive to PSP), create-a-skater mode, face mapping (using pics from memory stick), over 20 songs and basically everything else the PS2 version had to offer. It's as complete a package as any full-scale console title and just goes to show that PSP games needn't be scaled down all that much to work well.

But the fact remains that this is a straight-up, rather clumsy port of a game we've basically already played. Unless you're massively swayed by the idea of playing outdoors or on the train, there's really no incentive to buy it if you've already conquered its big brother. We just wish they'd created a PSP-specific sequel, simplified and streamlined for handheld play. Even a port of *Pro Skater 3* would've worked better than this. The (relatively) simple objectives and beautifully-designed levels (Canada pumped our nads – specifically the car park at the bottom end with its endless combo opportunities) were very 'handheld' in nature, with three minute runs in favour of running about looking for missions. You could dip in and out, doing objectives at whichever pace you see fit, unlike in *Remix*. This is a wasted opportunity, although perhaps still worth a look as an example of just what PSP is capable of achieving. **Andy Kelly**

■ *Import Remix now.*



PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY	GRAPHICS	SOUND
+ As hugely tight and responsive as ever. – Though the poor frame rate lets it down.	+ Impressive draw distance and scale. – The character models look a bit jaggy.	+ Some great songs on the soundtrack... – ...that are utterly awful on the PSP's tinny speakers.

LIFESPAN
There's so much do here and the customization options are endless. There's no reason for it not to last you ages.
MONTHS — YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
WORLD TOUR SOCCER

IT'S WORSE THAN...
NFSU: RIVALS

A bit of a dodgy conversion, but otherwise a very, very good game. This amount of stuff on one UMD disc is amazing, and range of things you can do is remarkable. Not perfect, but still great.

81

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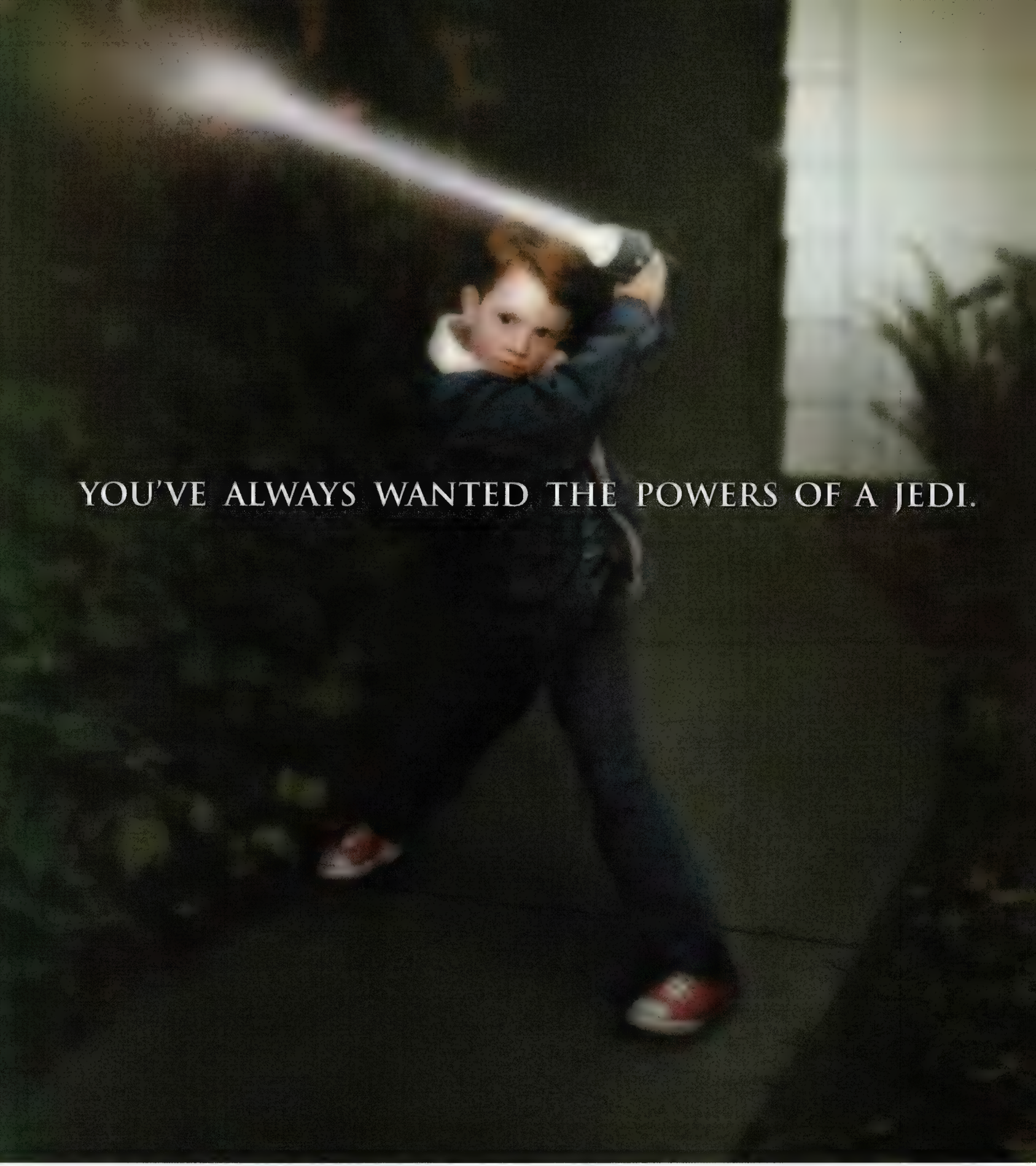

XBOX

PlayStation.2

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ULTIMATE SPIDER-MAN®

DOING WHATEVER A SPIDER CAN, HERE COMES SPIDER-MAN. AGAIN.

Sometimes we still play *Spider-Man 2*. Not for those whining kids with their balloons or the joy of trying to hitch a copter ride to Staten Island, but for the sheer stress-relief of swooping through the city, sprinting along walls and generally behaving like *Tony Hawk* with a bungee rope. *Spidey 2* was great, and we can't wait for the next o... what's that? Two-thousand-and-frickin-*seven* for the Spidey 3 movie – and therefore *game*? What's Sam Raimi *doing*? Remaking the brilliant Evil Dead 2 and doing the first proper sequel to the even-more-brilliant Army Of Darkness? Oh, right.

Don't worry, though, true believers – salvation's on the way, and it's coming in comic-book form. The new Spider-Man game is *Ultimate Spider-Man*, based on the comic books rather than the movies. Here's how it breaks down: Ultimate Spider-Man was Marvel's reinvention of the wall-crawler, released to coincide with the first film and make the series more accessible by removing the phone-book-sized back-story. Scripted by renowned comic-scribbler Brian Michael Bendis (better known for more 'adult' work like the frankly unpleasant Torso), it ditched the radioactive spider in favour of a GM arachnid and younger hero – mostly in line with the films' reinvention of

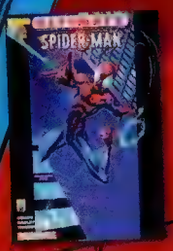
ACROSS TOWN...

"HELP, SPIDER-MAN!"

Ah, the familiar cry of the New Yorker in trouble. As in *Spider-Man 2*, you'll be frequently distracted from your villain-battling duties by civvies in need of attention, although unlike *Spidey 2*, it's usually a bit more serious than a lost balloon. In the early going, for instance, you're forced to clean up the trail of destruction left by Rhino, and all the in-game baddies will chip in and cause some terror for the average citizens going about their business.

SPIDER-SENSE TINGLING

Need some catch-up to get into the – ah-ha-ha – 'swing' of things? We'd recommend the following seminal issues of Spider-Man.

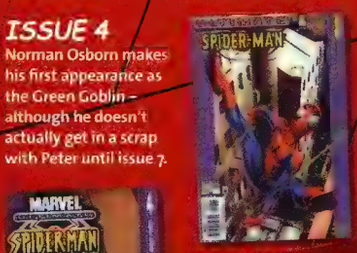


ISSUE 1

It's the story we all know and love – super-nerd Peter Parker gets bitten by GM spider & becomes super-jock until the death of his uncle teaches him a valuable lesson about responsibility. This only took eleven pages when Stan Lee did it in Amazing Fantasy 15 – here it's six issues of Eisner-award-winning teen angst.

ISSUE 4

Norman Osborn makes his first appearance as the Green Goblin – although he doesn't actually get in a scrap with Peter until issue 7.



ISSUE 8

The first appearance of Wilson Fisk – the Kingpin (that's Michael Clarke Duncan from Daredevil for non-comic types). Spidey's still hopeless as a hero at this stage, and ends up getting chucked out of a window by the tubby funster, whose only powers involve eating cakes. Boo.

ISSUE 14

Kraven The Hunter – long-time fan favourite – finally surfaces as – yes – a reality TV star from Australia. You know, like Joe Pasquale. But not quite so loathsome.

ISSUE 33

Petey finds his dad's abandoned spider-suit – which, obviously, turns out to be evil. A couple of issues later, it's snaffled by Peter's high-school chum Eddie Brock Jr. – who turns into slobbering nutcase Venom. If only he'd, say, chucked it in an incinerator or something, eh?

ISSUE 50

The first appearance of Ultimate Black Cat, long-time sort-of-squeeze of Spidey who – ironically enough – doesn't fancy Peter Parker. Makes some things a bit tricky

ISSUE 66

The first team-up between Ultimate Spidey and Ultimate Wolverine. Note: snikty-snikt joke deleted on grounds of being crap.

ISSUE 70

Spidey drops in on Stephen Strange and meets the Ultimates, Marvel's *other* most popular super-team.

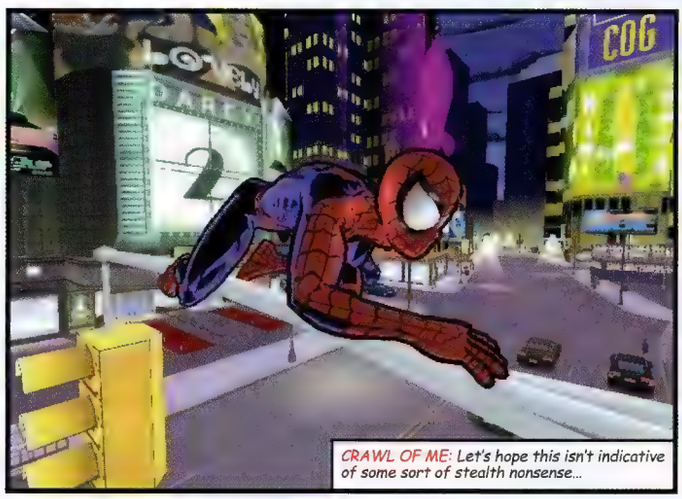
ISSUE 72

Harry Osborn becomes the Hobgoblin, super-technophile and murderer of his own dad. Boo, hiss.

SURF'S UP: Is that the Ultimate Silver Surfer? Activision refuse to say. .

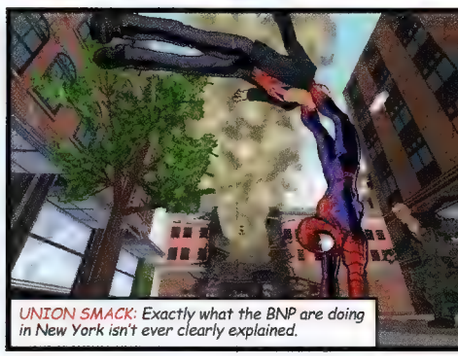
WATSON MY MIND: Well, she's still an improvement on polygon Kirsten Dunst.

STICKY MARTIN: Suddenly, Spider-Man realised he was walking on the wrong vertice.



CRAWL OF ME: Let's hope this isn't indicative of some sort of stealth nonsense...

BOOM BOX: The last game was a bit short on explosions, now that we think about it. Hurrah!



UNION SMACK: Exactly what the BNP are doing in New York isn't ever clearly explained.

MEANWHILE...

VIOLET TENDENCIES: Will you really be able to kill people? In a comic-book game? Well...

VENOM!

In the original comic, the Venom suit was an alien symbiote that bonded with Peter's biggest rival – Daily Globe reporter Eddie Brock – turning him into a Gene Simmons-tongued, super-strong monster. In the *Ultimate* universe, the outfit's actually a cancer-curing bodysuit developed by Peter and Eddie's parents, but has pretty much the same disastrous effects. And it's still nicknamed Project Venom. Dabbling in medicinal costumes – best left to the professionals, kids.

the character. Bendis is also scripting the game, which picks up where the comic's 'Therapy' arc left off (issue 39, fact fans), with the disappearance of Spidey's arch-nemesis, Venom.

All of which means one important thing – remember how the worst you could do in *Spidey 2* was jostle pedestrians? Well, Spidey's still a red 'n' blue boy scout, but you'll also get the chance to play as Venom, his black-suited nemesis. Venom's got most of the same basic wall-crawling abilities as Spidey, but while the webslinger's all about the acrobatics, Venom favours brute force. He's able to sling cars and (small) water towers around, smash pedestrians into the tarmac, stab people with tentacles and (probably) drool

"YOU'LL ALSO GET THE CHANCE VENOM, SPIDEY'S BLACK-

on them. Despite all this, he's a conflicted soul on the search for the truth about his parents too, so it's not out of the question that the pair'll eventually team up. You'll be playing the game with each of them in tandem, swapping between the two as circumstances dictate. Though Marvel mainstays like Sandman, Rhino and Elektra have already appeared in the comic, it's also promised that two new Marvel characters will make their Ultimate debut in the game – we're expecting Mysterio or Elektro, but secretly hoping for a more left-field pick like The Punisher.

The game itself is very familiar to *Spidey 2* – at least, in terms of control. Spidey's old web-zipping, swinging and wall-sprinting abilities return, together with a slightly more elaborate combo system that provides even more ways to attack enemies with sticky white fluid. You'll have noticed the new look to the graphics, too – it's quite obviously cel-shading, but Activision are insisting on calling it '3D inking', provided by near-legendary artist Mark Bagley. It's twinned with a new system of comic-style panels that highlight important events – for instance, during the game, you might be happily swinging around, when a panel suddenly WHAMs into your field of vision to show a baby in a burning car, with another panel underneath to show its position. From there, it's a desperate dash to reach the burning vehicle, grab it and hammer the shoulder buttons to kick the door off/drag it to safety. In tougher sections, there'll be entire streets-worth of pedestrians clamouring for help, with ailments ranging from being wedged

TO PLAY AS SUITED NEMESIS"

ELSEWHERE...

RHINO BLASTY: Honestly, why doesn't he just buy a gun or something?

CHAAARGE!

Thankfully, Spider-Man series mainstay and perpetual comedy figure Rhino's no longer simply a fat-man wearing an ill-fitting grey suit, with a serious case of the (fnarr!) horn. Instead, he's now a man-monster dripping with metal, who... well, actually, he still charges at you and bangs his head when you hop out of the way. Will he ever learn? No, no he won't.

IN HOLLYWOOD...

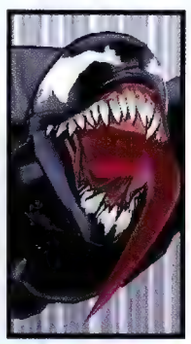
THREE - IT'S THE MAGIC NUMBER

You'll have to hang around for PS3 to get hold of the inevitable *Spider-Man 3*, but that's not to say you can't get gibberingly excited about the prospect of the third film. With a concrete-clad release date of May 2007, it's expected to centre on the Spidey/Venom/Carnage hate-triangle, with – potentially – The Rock and Christian Bale playing the latter two characters.

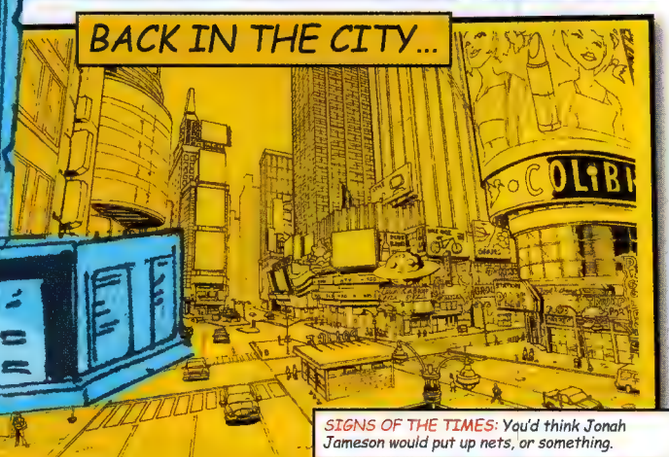
Even more exciting, though, are the lady-elements – Sam Raimi's rumoured to be angling for rogue slayer Eliza Dushku as the Black Cat, while the word is that teen wunderkind Lindsay Lohan's up for a role as Firestar. Remember that mournful look MJ gave Peter at the end of part two? It might not be the villains she has to worry about...

CAT'S THE WAY: After this, we got Milf to Photoshop out the T-shirt. See it next issue! Maybe.

BICEP IT UP: According to the girls in the office, new Spidey's arms are 'too thin.' Bah.



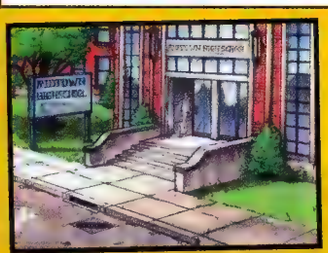
BACK IN THE CITY...



SIGNS OF THE TIMES: You'd think Jonah Jameson would put up nets, or something.

LOOK! UP IN THE SKY!

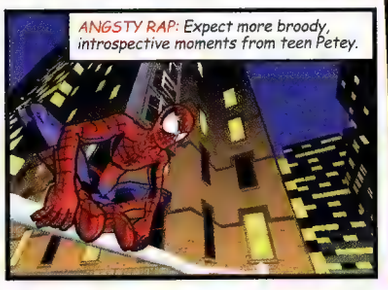
OK, wrong superhero. From what we've seen, it looks like *Spidey* retains the free-roaming New York map, though early levels take place across separate mini-stages – a bit like the boss battles from *Mercenaries*. Expect locations to include Midtown High School – with Flash Thompson-dodging Bemani minigame, hopefully – the Oscorp Lab, the New York sewers and the Big Apple itself...



CRUMBLE IN THE BRONX: And there's real-time scenic deformation, too. Top stuff

VIEW TO A KILL: Camera angles, eh? Dramatic = useless. .

FLAMING HIGH: Common street punks make a strong case for gun control. .



ANGSTY RAP: Expect more broody, introspective moments from teen Petey.

WHAT THE?!...

...AND HIS AMAZING 'FRIENDS'

The beauty of the *Ultimate* title is that it gives Activision free reign to use over 70 comics-worth of reinvented heroes and villains in the game. These are the front-runners for inclusion at the moment...

DR OCTOPUS

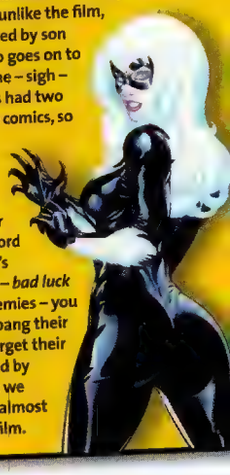
As in the Alfred Molina version, Ock's a man with a huge set of prototype metal arms, driven mad by the accidental death of his wife during an experiment. In the comic, he suspects Peter's true identity, being aware of his dad's scientific experiments with web-fluid.

THE GREEN GOBLIN

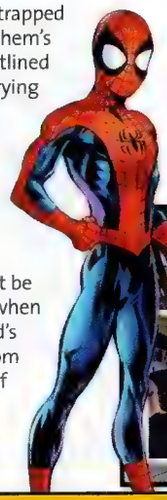
As in the film, Norman Osborne's a schizo millionaire with a green suit – but unlike the film, he's stabbed by son Harry, who goes on to become the – sigh – Hobgoblin. Either way, he's had two story arcs to himself in the comics, so he's almost certain to appear in the game.

BLACK CAT

Felicia Hardy, a cat-burglar who blames tubby crimelord the Kingpin for her father's death. She uses – get this – *bad luck powers* to distract her enemies – you know, like making them bang their heads on cupboards or forget their car keys. Supposedly killed by Elektra in the comics, but we doubt that'll last – she'll almost certainly be in the third film.



under widescreen TVs to being trapped in burning buildings. Rescuing them's simply a case of slinging red-outlined civilians over your shoulder, carrying them until they turn green (to represent a 'safe' area), then dropping them off again. Activision refer to this as 'threat-prioritisation' – we call it 'leaving the selfish tosser under the lorry until last'. Alternatively, flash panels might be introduced by special moves – when Venom leaps at a security guard's face, you're treated to a shot from the hapless rent-a-cop's point of view, just before he gets tentacled up like a B-anime heroine. The cut-scenes take



"IT'S EXCITINGLY LIKE HOW WE IMAGINED LIVING COMICS WOULD BE WHEN WE WERE SPIDEY-LOVING KIDS"

advantage of these visual stylings, too, introducing villains and side-stories in abrupt face-blasts of panelling. Onomatopeia (that's stuff like 'WHACK!' or 'NYAARGH!', ill-educated types) flies onto the screen in a riot of colour – in fact, it's excitingly like how we imagined living comics would be like when we were excitable Spidey-loving kids.

Potential problems? Well, we've only really seen early moments in the game, where the buildings are worryingly small compared to the concrete 'n' steel leviathans of the previous game. We're hopeful that the action'll move away from the suburbs into that New York map that let you leap off the Empire State building, but Activision refuse to give anything away. What's certain is that there'll be much more scenic interaction than in previous games. Apart from new combos that involve springing off walls and into burglars' faces, one early level sees fire hydrants being smashed to flood the area with water.

For what it's worth, we're hoping that the fact that Activision are simply tweaking an already solid game engine means they'll be devoting more time to the often-dodgy mission design (remember the Mysterio missions from *Spidey 2*? Grrr...) and extra content. Packed with the extra outfits and retro comicana that made the PSone versions such collector-faves, this could actually be the ultimate Spider-Man game, rather than a quick Activision cash-in. And what'll we do in 2006? Well, there's always Spider-Man 2099...

Dear Spider-Man,

Thanks for stopping Doc Ock blowing up New York and delivering those pizzas on time - although we said double pepperoni, dumbass. Anyway, we'd like your next game to be even better than the last one, so can you please make sure you do the following?

* Stop repeating the same six catchphrases all the time - come up with some new ones.
* Work on firing that web-netting stuff you sometimes use to rescue civilians.
* Team up with some new heroes - we're thinking Daredevil or Wolverine, if poss.
* Bring along some new costumes - we like the 2099 one, but how about Prodigy from when you let MJ have a go at designing your outfit? No? Shucks.
* Include some GTA-style dating minigames - preferably playing MJ and Gwen Stacy off against each other.

Cheers,
The PSM2 Team

TIME FOR ACTION...

STICKY GERVAIS: Traditionalism meets Tae-Bo with Spidey's new acro-moves.

CATCHES PEOPLE, JUST LIKE FLIES

***Spider-Man*'s got the usual complement of abilities, including cocooning bad guys and twirling them around his head so they smack into walls (but not killing them – 'great power' and all that, remember?) – but he's also got some new moves, mostly involving bouncing off walls.**

+Condition+
++++++++++
+++Black+++
++++++++++
+Position Compromised+
++++++++++++++++++++
+++++Abort Mission++++
+++++Abort Mission++++
+++++Abort Mission++++
++++++++++++++++++++
Chinese Govt aware of operation.
Enclosed surveillance photogra
transcript tapes, ID and
to get you the hell out
You're on your own An
God be with you...
++++++++++++
++++++ END
++++++++
5/25
0/0
Enemies intelligent and well organised
high powered weaponry
used to flush out guards

Only available on

PlayStation 2

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SWORDFISH STUDIOS

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Hands

"AND LOTS OF CUT-SCENES FEATURING GRIZZLED TERRORISTS SHOUTING AT MEN TIED TO CHAIRS"
CONFLICT: GLOBAL TERROR PAGE 52

KILLER 7
A game from the minds behind *Resi 4* and *Devil May Cry* – under the control of a man in a gimp mask called Suda 51... Fact is stranger than fiction.

MEDAL OF HONOR: EUROPEAN ASSAULT
'Dogs of War' no more. *MOH* gets a new name, a new setting, though decides to forgo a new look...

CONFLICT: GLOBAL TERROR
After two jaunts round Baghdad and a camping holiday in Vietnam, it's time to go round the world.

You want more?!
We advise spinning back and checking out *Soul Calibur 3* (pg14), *Tomb Raider Legends* (pg 18) and the latest on *24* (pg 21).

WELCOME...

DAN D

We love it when developers take risks. You know, do something different. Which is why this month's Hands-On section is so interesting. In one hand we have *Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of The Sith* – a game that takes a movie primarily about fighting and ingeniously spins it into a scrolling beat-'em-up. And in the other we have *Killer 7*, a game that, despite playing it extensively, Andy found almost impossible to describe. Check page 48 to find him nearly lost for words.

The right blend, the blend that will make all the money and please all the gamers is, obviously, somewhere between the two. Don't dish up a warmed-up, corned beef re-hash of Lord of the Rings-with-glo-swords and don't get off your mash on Rennies and test our patience with a game where you have to press ⊗ to walk forwards and turn by choosing options from a menu.

And while we're on the subject if we see one more game where you get to customise a series of licensed cars in the "most radical body shop ever seen in a videogame" then we'll... be looking at the first screenshot from *Need For Speed: Most Wanted* on page 19. Bugger.

PSM2

PREVIEW PROMISE

PSM2 is always first with the biggest and best games. Every issue, you can rely on us – here's why!

- Unlike any other PS2 mag, we play every game we preview – that means hands-on opinion, not net rumour.
- We're gamers just like you – so we print the detail you demand. Check our sidebars for the latest facts and stats.
- PSM2 is 100% editorially independent! You won't get the same quality of hard-hitting, informed, passionate reviews anywhere else.
- We feature more screenshots than any other magazine.
- You can see what we've played! The PSM2 DVD features in-game hands-on footage we've taken just for you.
- PSM2. No one else is close. And don't you forget it.

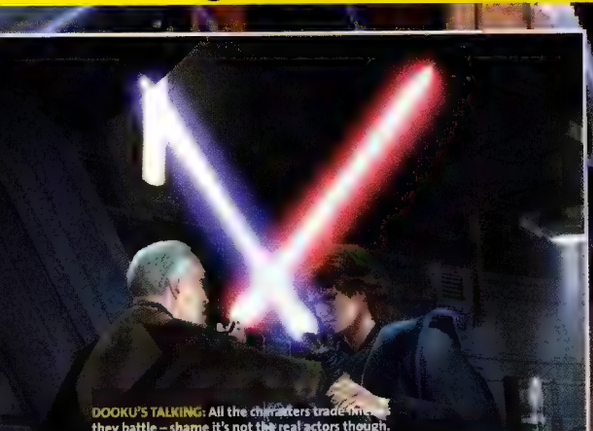
"HIS FACE IS A SCULPTURE ENTITLED 'CONCENTRATION'. THE POOR OLD DEAR IS CLEARLY BRICKING IT"

AY EV GAME WE PREV

Publisher: Activision
Developer: The Collective ■ ETA: May

STAR WARS EPISODE III REVENGE OF THE SITH

They forgot to make an Attack of the Clones game. Could you imagine them making that mistake twice? First came Lego. Now we finish the saga for real.



DOOKU'S TALKING: All the characters trade [illegible] they battle – shame it's not the real actors though.

ANTICIPATED FEATURES

- 12 levels each framed by 12 minutes of action from the film.
- Two-player Duel and Co-Op modes
- Upgradable force and saber attacks, powered-up by skill point-system dished out as a reward for 'cool' combat.

Two tiny Jedi starfighters twirl and weave through a storm of burning debris and a needle-cloud of laser fire. At the controls of one is Obi Wan Kenobi (in beardy Ewan McGregor form). His face is a sculpture entitled 'Concentration' – the poor old dear is clearly bricking it. Meanwhile in the other, red, dart-like ship slouches Anakin Skywalker (a barely awake Hayden Christensen) who flips and spins his craft effortlessly, one hand on the controls, with such extreme nonchalance that it's as if his other unseen hand is mixing a martini. To use a well known Jedi phrase, it's obvious that Obi Wan's petulant apprentice 'couldn't give a shit'.

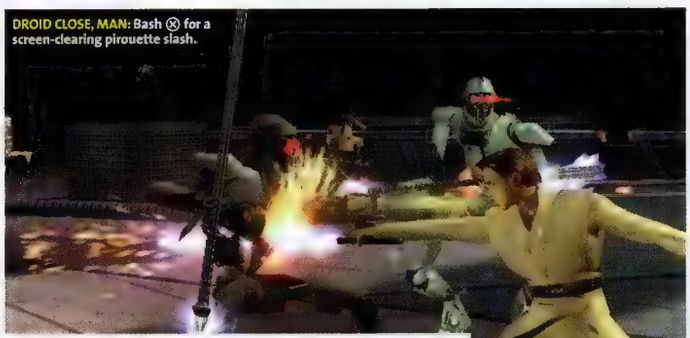
The two plough head-on towards a vast star destroyer. A huge blue panel on its side glows the glow of a Star Wars force field and a camera track shows that both ships will shortly be crushed like gnats. Obi Wan barks that the shield is still up (still grimacing like he's about to soil his robes) prompting Anakin to flip his ship one more time and blast away the control unit with a single 'pzzzip'. At the very last moment the shield drops and both ships hurtle into the landing bay – still doing a million miles per hour. It's going to be a rough landing. Abruptly the ships hit the deck, screetching and sliding in a hail of sparks. With no signs of slowing down they sideswipe into an army of droids, sending them tumbling – shattered – into the air. Now the (really) good bit. Just as both ships finally begin to slow, both Jedi pop the hoods on their ships and emergency eject, *backflipping 40ft into the air* before landing on their feet, pulling light sabres and scything through oncoming droids in a single flowing manoeuvre. *And then the game starts.* Your virtual Anakin *finishes* the sabre swipe that real Anakin *begins*... As opening sequences of videogames go, we've rarely seen better.

Of course they've got great material to work with – *Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith* (The Game) features 12 minutes of The Movie and at each level's start you get served a portion which slips seamlessly into the in-game action without a blip or hiccup. As a scene-setting top and tail to your game action, unseen footage from the unreleased Star Wars movie will do nicely. It's very clever. In fact it's exactly as clever as when EA's *Lord of the Rings* games did exactly the same thing last year. And the similarities don't end there. Once gameplay starts you're guiding your characters along mid-to-narrow predescribed corridors of action, biffing things with a sword. Occasionally you're directed to press buttons to enable special bits (in rip-offs lifted

straight from EA's 'how to idiot-proof your game' manual) but most of the time you're a slave to the ⊗ button and the repeated thwacking thereof. The *Lord of the Rings* games sold millions and what is Episode III if not a protracted slog down a steel corridor with a lava pit duel waiting at the end?...

We might bemoan the lack of any flying, shooting, driving or kissing-based action (when the movie clearly features all four) but what we do have is the world's most advanced scrolling beat-'em-up. Ho hum. It's time give up any hope of this finally being the Star Wars game you deserve and learn to roll with these punches.

The game is being developed by The Collective (currently hot on the *Marc Ecko* tip and clearly at the peak of their powers). It looks great. The screen is packed full of things fighting and exploding and it's impossible to imagine the game being any *more Star Wars*. The music swells, the menus glisten and the sword combat (unleashed through the pleasingly easy mixing up taps of ⊗ and ▢) is all based on real sword 'n' kendo play provided by Nick Gillard, the fight co-ordinator of Episodes I to III. Hell, you'll even swear blind that the in-game voice acting (of which there is *loads*) is by McGregor and Christensen rather than the skilled soundalikes they used on the Clone Wars cartoons. The scenes are set, the twelve levels play out the entire film's story (er... missing out the flying, driving, shooting and kissing bits) and everything looks great and works perfectly.



DROID CLOSE, MAN: Bash ⊗ for a screen-clearing pirouette slash.

"THERE'S A BEAT-'EM-UP MODE TOO. PICK YOUR CHARACTER THEN KICK OFF SOUL CALIBUR-STYLE"

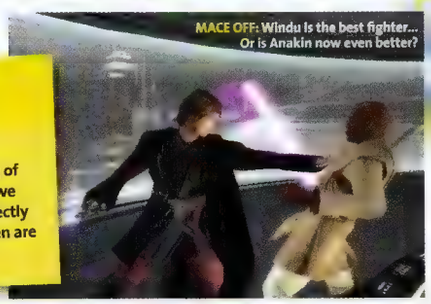
The voiceovers tell you what to do ("smash the power converters, Anakin" etc.) and you're constantly updated on your droid-hacking prowess with "Great!" and "Cool!" rankings on-screen for each mini-battle. The combo system makes even the most lame of players look like a Jedi master and skill points earned can be spent on new, ever more powerful multiple swipes, stabs and decapitations. Shades of *Lord of the Rings* yet again, there.

Further attacks come in the form of Force moves, which you can use to push objects (ie, barrels) around, and to 'Force Push' your attackers off their metallic pins. Naturally there's a power-bar to limit your freakish skills and power-ups for this are found through searching and smashing activities.

Pleasingly, they're so confident in the abilities of the fighting engine that there's a whole one-on-one beat-'em-up game in there too. Pick two characters from EpIII's cast and kick off *Soul Calibur*-style in arenas from the film. The first character we plumped for was Mace Windu (naturally) and we were pleased to find that – as per the movies – he's the most powerful character. Authentic, certainly, but that makes the fights ever so slightly unbalanced. Still, it's a great 'bonus' that will really help the game's lifespan.

And that could be the game's failing. With 12 levels it's not super-lengthy and if they're all of the nature of the early levels we played through, they're not exactly brain-taxing either. By comparison *God of War* (reviewed on page 56) is infinitely more complex, varied and surprising, and *Devil May Cry 3* (reviewed last issue) is twenty times as tough. Hmm. Daniel Griffiths SWET: ROTS *lands May 5th.*

RO-BO SELECTOR: Play as Anakin and an AI-controlled Obi Wan will take out additional droids.



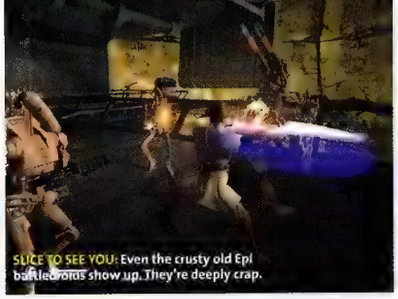
MACE OFF: Windu is the best fighter... Or is Anakin now even better?

PSM RECKONS

The 'turret sections' where you man enemy gun emplacements mixes the action up, and the spending of accumulated skill to improve your moves is cool, but we doubt this will ever elevate above the realms of 'perfectly competent movie game'. Now, we'll say it again. When are they going to do 'Han Solo: Intergalactic Smuggler'?

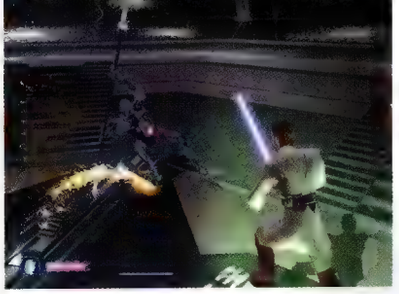
SWORD ALMIGHTY

Obvious one, this. Thanks to the movie's regular duel battles (there are five major sword fights in the movie, we're told) you've got a ready made structure for levels and boss battles. Expect therefore to go toe-to-toe against General Grevious, Count Dooku, Mace Windu, Yoda (?) before the final Anakin Vs Obi Wan lava-tastic, Darth-birthing battle.



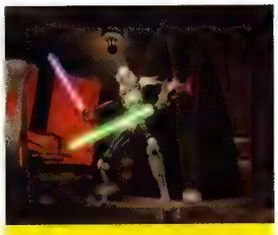
SLICE TO SEE YOU: Even the crusty old Episode I battle droids show up. They're deeply crap.

FIGHT SPEED: The camera then swoops in for a beat-'em-up style view of the action.



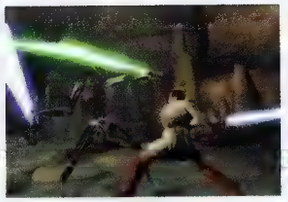
"THE VISUALS CARRY ALMOST AS MUCH DETAIL AS A MICHAELANGELO PAINTING"

LIGHT BABE-R: It's not all characters from the Episode III movie either. The game makers have created some of their own too. Er, great.



GREVIOUS' BODILY ARMS

More sneaky Episode III fact for you. The new 'mid-movie' boss is a new character named General Grevious. This droid army commander is ideally suited for the roll – being a droid himself. And don't let his weedy, beatable appearance in this shot fool you. We've seen footage that shows him sprout four robotic arms, each toting a light-saber...



HP FORCE: Collect force power-ups that use them at vital moments.

DARK ATTACK: Evil Anakin Skywalker in the Jedi temple.

ALWAYS TWO THERE ARE...

Given that most of the battles (especially in the early stages) involve Obi Wan and Anakin fighting side by side, that game was begging for a multi-player mode. And the good news is that The Collective have included one. Unfortunately, because creating a two-player co-op game for the entire movie would have involved re-writing the script (let's face it Ben and Anakin do have some scenes apart...) the two-player levels are selected highlights from the single-player game. Still, it's a welcome addition, though the excellent AI buddy character is invariably just as effective a mate as a real-life couch-sharing co-op player.

The real two-player fun comes from the Duel Mode, two-player beat-'em-up style combat arena. It's so accomplished that we're certain some players will just use this mode and never play through the story properly.

SPARE ARTE: Many droid and equipment designs that didn't make the movie are used in the game.

Publisher: Grasshopper
Developer: Capcom ETA: July 2005

KILLER 7

Previously, this made little sense to us. Now, after an exclusive playthrough, it makes *no* sense. If you thought *Silent Hill* was 'a bit weird', you ain't seen nothing yet.

ANTICIPATED FEATURES

- Control seven different characters, each with their own unique skills.
- Puzzles to solve in a classic *Resident Evil*-style.
- Five different stories, each set in their own location, including Paris and Japan.
- Control the game in both first and third person.
- Improve your characters' abilities via a simple RPG-style upgrade system.

First we have Dan Smith. He's an all-rounder with a penchant for firearms – perfect for beginners. Then there's Mask De Smith, pro wrestler and heavy weapons expert. If something's in your way, his twin grenade launchers should see to it. Next? Con Smith, a dual-pistol-wielding boy wonder able to reach unspeakable speeds. He's blind but has incredible hearing. Then we have Kaede Smith – she's deeply troubled and can, somehow, destroy mysterious magical barriers by, er, *slashing her wrists*.

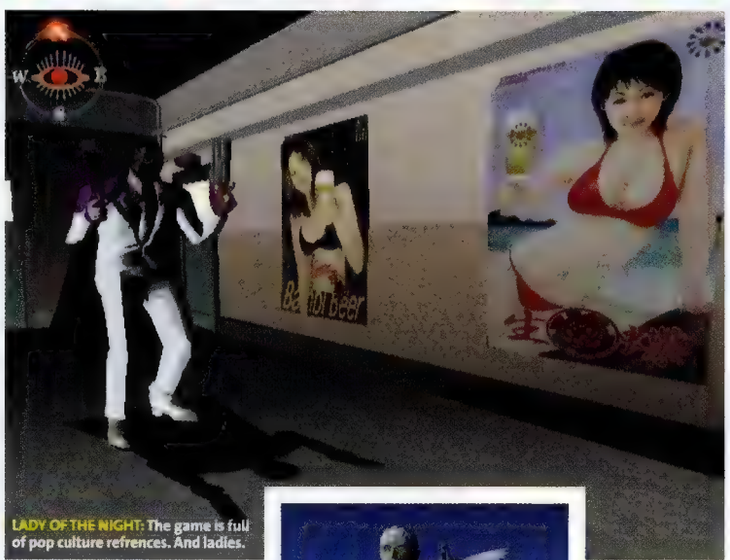
Are you following us? Good. Next up, there's Garcian Smith. When the others die he'll fetch their heads, put them in a suitcase and revive them later on. Coyote Smith next, a petty thief and an expert with classic revolvers. He can pick locks and access hard-to-reach areas. Lastly, the frankly terrifying Kevin Smith, a topless, quivering crackpot who also happens to be a skilled and deadly knife fighter. Together they form the Killer 7, an elite group of mercenaries-for-hire who – well, we don't quite know how to put this – are *the same person*; the multiple personalities of an elderly, wheelchair-bound psychic called Harman Smith.

Don't try to understand, because even the *development team* can't get their heads round it. Basically, eccentric designer Suda 51 (yes, he has a number for a surname) came up with the look, story and basics of the game and producers Shinji Mikami (*Devil May Cry*) and Hiroyuki Kobayashi (*Resident Evil*) were tasked with creating a game. The result? A first-and-third-person action/adventure with survival horror undertones. Just playing it is an exercise in mental strength. The sound and visuals are alarming, looking for all the world like David Lynch's worst (cel-shaded) nightmare, and everything is just strange – you hold a button to walk, use the stick to *select directions from a menu*, and killing enemies results in them exploding into a thousand blobs.

We hate to say it but if it wasn't for the character-switching (only certain 'personalities' can get past certain obstacles), it's an average shoot-'em-up. Only the unique visuals save *Killer 7* from gameplay mediocrity. In its favour, though, it's certainly unlike anything else on PS2. Or anything else at all, frankly. **Andy Kelly**

Killer 7 is out in July.

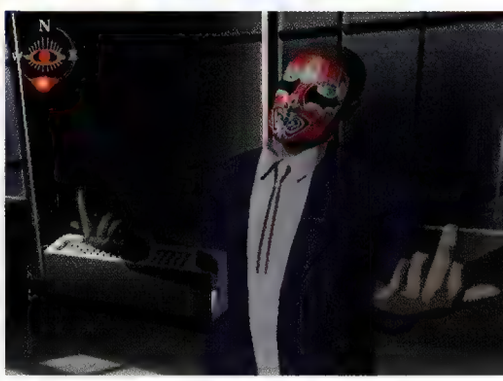
MASK AND YOU SHALL RECEIVE: Mask is the team's heavy weapons expert.



LADY OF THE NIGHT: The game is full of pop culture refrences. And ladies.

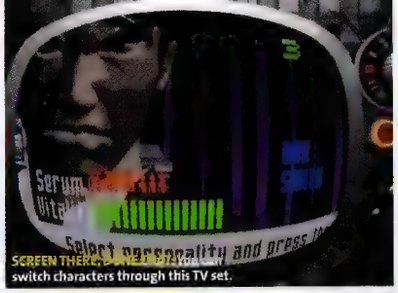
WHAT VIAL BEHAVIOUR

Every enemy you kill fills a blood meter on the side of the screen. Collected blood can be transformed into 'vials' which act as experience points. As is becoming a habit with Capcom, you can use these to increase the stats of each character, including how steady their aim is, how much damage they do and how effective their critical attacks are. You can also unlock new abilities, including the 'Down Attack' that lets you finish off enemies crawling on the floor after being shot in the legs or the kneecaps. Useful.



PSM² RECKONS

The skewed visuals and simplistic gameplay might put a lot of people off, but we can't help but be a little smitten by its looks and style. For all its flaws, we're at least thankful that it isn't just another FPS – it's an inexplicable head-fit instead. Still, when it comes down to it, *Killer 7* is looking like more of a novelty than a real videogame.



SCREEN THERE: Save & Load, or switch characters through this TV set.

"DON'T TRY TO UNDERSTAND IT BECAUSE EVEN THE DEVELOPMENT TEAM CAN'T GET THEIR HEAD ROUND IT"

GIMP BIZKIT: This strange bondage man will tell you how to play the game.

"Coo-ee! Want to know why Killer 7 is so odd? It's all thanks to me! Me, me, MEEE! I'm Killer 7's creator and eccentric mask-wearing design genius, Suda 51! I've got two of the best game producers in the world jumping through my mad (square-shaped) hoops! Oi, Shinji! Is that golf club-shaped mid-level boss ready yet? And you, Hiroyuki! Pop the Breville on, I'm STAAARRRVING! Byee!"

ENEMY OF THE STATE

Killer 7's enemies are *horrible*. They aren't as disturbing as *Silent Hill 2*'s shambling mutants, but they're far more intimidating. They're invisible to start with – you only know they're there by the sound of a terrifying cackle and when they appear they're shuddering half-human monsters with *bombs lodged in their torsos*. If you don't knock them off before they reach you they'll explode and you'll be dead. Later, they take other ghoulish shapes including ghosts, spiders and (we're really not making this up) satanic beach balls.

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: EA LA ETA: Summer

MEDAL OF HONOR: EUROPEAN ASSAULT

Medal of Honor returns but this time, it has to be said, there's rather a lot of competition out there. Can this one spark renewed interest in the war genre?

ANTICIPATED FEATURES

- A storyline that actually plays on your emotions and tries to impress the trauma of war on the player.
- Focuses on four specific battles – St Nazaire, North Africa (now that's hardly European, is it), Stalingrad and, er, Bulge.
- All new 'adrenaline' feature offering temporary invulnerability.

The field of war gaming is becoming bogged-down. *Brothers In Arms. Call Of Duty. Conflict. Full Spectrum Warrior.* If we're going to keep blowing soldiers away without suffering from war fatigue, EA need to add something different to the latest *Medal Of Honor*. Concentrating on four of the key battles in World War II? Good. A stronger, more moving, narrative structure, written by Apocalypse Now co-creator, John Milius? Yep. Temporary invulnerability in the midst of battle? What the...?

That'll be *MOH:EA*'s 'adrenaline mode', then. If you, as US Army Lieutenant William Holt, perform well enough on the battlefield – in other words, kill as many as you can and ensure your men remain largely unharmed – then you're rewarded with a shot of adrenaline. EA describe this as being like 'when an Olympic sprinter gets in the "zone"' and guns for glory ruthlessly and efficiently. We'd say it's more like being superhuman and wonder how this is going to come across in a hyper-serious wartime shooter.

But that's only a small part of *MOH:EA*. It just happens to feel slightly incongruous in its setting. The important thing is that, right now, *European Assault* is looking like a worthy successor to the previous *Medal Of Honor* games. The decision to concentrate on four specific battles looks a good one, from blowing up a ship with 600lbs of dynamite in the Battle of St Nazaire through to the Battle Of The Bulge. It makes the action feel focused.

They're also trying to play on your emotions this time around with Milius's script, which sees Holt – incidentally, a real person who lent his input to the game – reminiscing on his days as a soldier. EA are hoping his story can jerk some tears from the player, but whether this'll be more successful than the excellent *Brothers In Arms* remains to be seen.

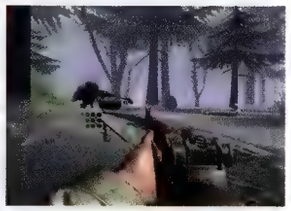
European Assault will almost certainly be at least the equal of its predecessors and with (apparently) up to 50 NPCs on screen at once, it should be a blast. Whether it'll be different enough from the recent slew of war games, however, is a different matter entirely. Stay tuned, then. **David Cook**

European Assault is out in summer.

OH AYE, EA'S AI IS A-OK

EA promise the most sophisticated AI yet in *European Assault*, with soldiers reacting to environments and enemies with little-to-no prompting from you. If you happen across a group of Nazis, your squad will split automatically and seek out cover. Or, if they're approaching death, they enter 'desperation mode'. Here, they basically go a bit mental and just charge around, blasting away, in a 'last stand' kind of scenario. How heroic.

KILL MILL: There'll be some evil Nazi scum in the vicinity of this otherwise-lovely windmill. You mark our words.



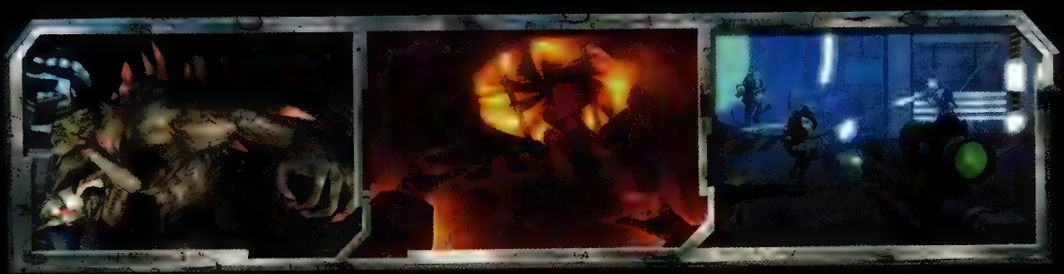
OH, WHAT A LOVELY WAR: *European Assault* certainly looks the part. But will it prove to be as good as before?

PSM RECKONS

Well, it's another *Medal Of Honor*, so it'll probably be at least as good as earlier versions. But we're a bit concerned that, basically, we've seen it all before – and seen far too much of its ilk lately from rival franchises. It'll be good, no doubt about that, but it'll have to do something very special to rouse our enthusiasm to the heights.

AREA-51™

THE CONSPIRACY IS NO LONGER A THEORY



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Publisher: SCi
Developer: Pivotal ETA: Autumn

CONFLICT: GLOBAL TERROR

They've done the Gulf, everyone else (including them) has done Vietnam and World War II – what's left? Scary fictional-yet-worryingly-possible future wars of course.

ANTICIPATED FEATURES
- Vast, varied locations including jungles, temples, forests and cities.
- Intelligent AI that can do anything you can – circle-strafing, etc.
- Dozens of weapons and gadgets based on real military hardware.
- Control your squad via a simple and intuitive command system.

The likes of *Splinter Cell* and *Metal Gear Solid* have been doing it forever, but now it's *Conflict*'s turn to shift its series into a believable five-minutes-from-now 'near future' setting – a game world that revolves around supposedly real life problems that could, theoretically, affect all of us at any time. Well, that's what they're peddling – but it still verges on the fantastical; that skewed videogame 'reality' that's not quite believable, yet sufficiently factual to be labelled 'realistic'. *Splinter Cell* might be steeped in realism as far as the politics and plot go, but three green torches strapped to your head? That's just daft.

Taking a leaf from Tom Clancy's book(s), *Global Terror* eschews traditional warfare for – wait for it – *modern* warfare. So, yes, that means night vision goggles, heat-seeking missiles, laser-designated air strikes and big burly soldiers crashing around in wetsuits. You and your squad (all the blokes from *Desert Storm* except sniper Foley who has now been replaced by a lady – equal opportunities, you know?) have been tasked with stopping a group of militant neo-Nazis from blowing up the world or something. Look, it isn't important – all you need to know is that there are lots of men to shoot, lots of tanks to blow up and lots of cut-scenes featuring grizzled terrorists shouting at men tied to chairs.

It worries us, however, that the series doesn't seem to have changed much. The visuals are largely the same, the animations and level design similar and it feels more like an expansion pack than a full-blown sequel. In its favour though, things look and feel considerably tighter – Pivotal are mastering the ins-and-outs of the PS2 hardware and it shows, especially in some of the forest and snowy levels – and the scope for deep tactical play is definitely as important as ever. Bigger, more open levels mean you can send a sniper high for backup, an engineer in to lay booby traps and so on – you're only limited by your fevered imagination.

Andy Kelly
Global Terror is out in Autumn.

HUMAN AFTER ALL

For once, the 'intelligence' in 'artificial intelligence' is realistic. Pivotal's new AI system is eerily clever – enemies circle-strafing around pillars and trees, dodging, crouching, hiding and flanking like *actual people*. Impressive, especially when it takes you five minutes to kill one soldier because he's *outsmarting* you. It's a bit rough around the edges at the moment, but expect enemies to display Vorderman levels of intelligence.

THE NIGHT STO... ...ing in the dark has its advantages...

YARD TIMES: Taking control of this courtyard is a highlight.

PSM RECKONS

Things have changed but mysteriously feel almost *exactly* the same as before. Still, that isn't necessarily a bad thing and we're remaining positive – this is looking to be a remarkable return to form for the series after the disappointment that was *Conflict: Vietnam*. If you find *Full Spectrum Warrior* too bloated and *SOCOM* too simplistic and trigger-happy then *Conflict: Global Terror* could turn out to be the perfect inbetweener.

RETURN TO FORM

Having a command system is all fine and good, but *Conflict: Vietnam*'s leafy corridors simply didn't let you use it. Thankfully, *Global Terror* promises to hark back to the wide open spaces of the *Desert Storm* games so once again we'll be able to adorn our thinking hats and flex our tactical muscles; sniper on the left, engineer laying C4, heavy weapons man up front... brilliant. Just like we remember *Conflict*, before it went all rubbish.

ADVENTURE IS IN THE CARDS

Disney SQUARE ENIX

Kingdom Hearts CHAIN OF MEMORIES

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"WE GOT BORED OF HIDE AND SEEK WHEN WE WERE SEVEN"
HAUNTING GROUND PAGE 68

Reviews

PLAYED TO DESTRUCTION BY PS2 EXPERTS

76 MASHED: FULLY LOADED
There's reheated mash for tea tonight – but has this top-down racer had its chips or is it still spuddy brilliant? More bad puns await...

62 SINGSTAR POPWORLD
Wrap your lips around Girls Aloud and give Ashlee Simpson a good covering. Then get the Hives. That's the music biz, folks.

84 MONSTER HUNTER
Graphically, one of the strongest games of the year – but is *Monster Hunter* the future, or should it be left to rot in prehistory?

You want more?!
We've got reviews of *Stolen* (66), *Juiced* (70), Narc (72), *Ghost In The Shell* (80), *Gunbird Special Edition* (83) and *Spindrive Ping Pong* (83). **Ready? Dive in.**

WELCOME

"Surprise, surprise!" warbled Cilla Black in the '80s. "The unexpected hits you between the eyes!" And although she was actually singing about the surprise on people's faces when they were reunited on TV with family members that they were happy to have not seen for decades, when *God Of War* arrived at PSM2 Towers, we realised that she could equally have been singing about the expressions we all wore as we gathered round the PS2.

Although we were (of course) well aware that *God Of War* was probably going to be *quite* good, we were unprepared for just how fearsomely gripping this Greek orgy of destruction would prove itself to be. It's the best action game on PS2 bar none and has come almost completely out of the blue. Y'know, it's nice to be surprised from time to time.

But it's been a month of surprises. *Lego Star Wars* and *Area 51* surprised us by not being quite the crackers we'd anticipated. *Street Racing Syndicate* surprised us by *not* being a load of dreadful nonsense. And we were surprised by the very existence of *Spindrive* – a ping pong simulator, of all things. Unpleasantly surprised, mind you, but you can't win them all. Just bring on PS3 – and loads more surprises. We can't wait.

AWARDS

If you see one of these fellas on a review, you know your luck is most definitely 'in'...

PSM2 BRONZE AWARD
Awarded to games that score over 70. A thoroughly enjoyable, solid game and no mistake.

PSM2 SILVER AWARD
Awarded to games that score over 80. A top quality, cracking game is guaranteed.

PSM2 GOLD AWARD
Awarded to games that score over 90. Reserved for true classics – don't expect to see many of these.

PSM2 GAME OF THE MONTH
The best game in the issue. If you're getting only one game this month, get this!

PSM2'S SCORING SYSTEM

PSM2 is 100% editorially independent and we mark hard, but fair. We know you want buying advice you can trust and that's why when you see a game with a good score from PSM2 on the box, you can guarantee it's going to be worth the price. Marked precisely out of 100 rather than "three stars out of five", here's what those scores mean:

0-29	Shoddy nonsense. If you see a game with a score below 30, move away from the shelf.
30-49	Maybe some fun to be had but the gameplay and design are sure to be seriously flawed.
50-69	No major faults. This is fine for die-hard fans of the genre or if you spot it going cheap.
70-84	Now we're talking. An entertaining game that only just misses out on being special.
85-89	Get your wallet out! A game in this tight scoring band will be a near-classic.
90+	Unmissable. Essential. Superb. Classic. If you're a real gamer, you will need this game.

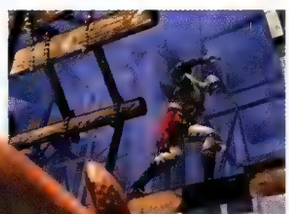
56

PSM2 GAME OF THE MONTH

GOD OF WAR

It's come from nowhere, but could this Greek odyssey be the best action game on PS2?

PSM2 GOLD AWARD



PLAYING PS2 LONGER, HARDER, FASTER

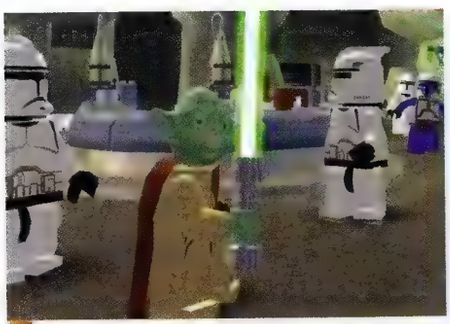
If we had any sense of irony, this review would be on page 51.

84 ENTHUSIA

82 STREET RACING SYNCIDATE

"SEE A VIDEO OF A REAL LIVE WOMAN DANCING AROUND IN HER UNDERPANTS"

STREET RACING SYNDICATE, PAGE 82



78 LEGO STAR WARS

78 COLD WINTER

DANIEL GRIFFITHS
EDITOR: Inspired by *Lego Star Wars*, Dan built a Lego country and made himself President. Sadly, he was impeached by the Lego population after an 'incident' with a Lego intern.

DANIEL DAWKINS
DEPUTY EDITOR: Dan thought a city too ambitious, so simply built a Lego house. But one night, a big, bad wolf blew it down. So Dan shot it. His wolfskin pants are comfortable but hot.

NATHAN IRVINE
STAFF WRITER: Nate's fascination with dinosaurs knows no bounds. He created a Lego version of a proud, dominant dino. "It's a Lego-saurus," he beamed as we punched him.

ANDREW KELLY
STAFF WRITER: Having watched Weird Science too often, Andy built a Lego woman. But all went wrong. "She won't let me near her," he griped. "I simply can't get my Lego-ver."

DAVID COOK
PROD ED: Dave likes Technic Lego, and invented a machine that fed him sausages. But he's now so fat he can't fit through the door. His liposuction operation is next week.

JOEL SNAPE
WRITER: Joel's a fan of 70s Top Of The Pops dancers, Legs & Co. He built his own personal version, Lego & Co, and ordered them to do some "sexy dancing". Sadly, the heat from their gyrations caused them to melt. Darn.

REVIEWED THIS ISSUE

86 HAUNTING GROUND

GAMES

God Of War pg56
Area 51 ..... pg60
Singstar Popworld pg62
Enthusia Professional Racing pg64
Stolen pg66
Ghost In The Shell pg67
Juiced pg68
Narc pg70
Lego Star Wars pg72
Mashed: Fully Loaded pg76
Monster Hunter pg77
Cold Winter pg78
Haunting Ground pg82
Street Racing Syndicate pg84
Gunbird Special Edition pg85
Spindrive Ping Pong pg85

86 BLADE TRINITY

DVDS

Blade Trinity pg86
The Manchurian Candidate pg87
After The Sunset pg87
Without A Paddle pg87
Enduring Love pg87
Duel pg87
Taxi pg87
National Treasure pg87

THE TRUTH

Every game ever reviewed! pg88

U.S.Robotics PSM2 plays online wirelessly with US Robotics hardware

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: SCEA
Publisher: SCEE
Players: 1
Memory Save: 453kb
Widescreen: Yes
50-60Hz: No
Surround Sound: Yes

PREVIOUSLY IN PSM2...
"IT'S THE SHEER EXUBERANCE OF THE COMBAT SYSTEM THAT'LL STICK IN YOUR HEAD"
PSM2#58

GAMEFAX
Action/Adventure
Violent
Hard
PS2 Exclusive

TRIVBURST
- Four magic attacks: Zeus' Fury, Army of Hades, Rage of Poseidon, Medusa's Gaze.
- Includes an hour of cinematic sequences.
- Fight beasts including Cyclops and Medusa.

"WATCH FOR THE EYES GLOWING IN THE GLOOM. THEN AIM BETWEEN THEM..."

GOD OF WAR

No, we hadn't heard of it either – but by Zeus, pick up the pad and you'll never forget. The devil may cry as we hail the new god of PS2 action games.

Normally, brilliant games make us happy, but Sony's awesome *God of War* makes us squirm in shame. Why? Since the game made its debut at last year's E3, we've written a massive – this is unbelievable – *86* words about it in an apologetic preview. Honestly. We've written more words about *Gallop Racer 2* or Jeremy Spake. It's like Jesus breakdancing off the cross and forgetting to write the Bible. Worse, now we've finished it – suffering smug glances from a rival magazine who wrote about it *weeks* ago, revelling in every brutal second and squealing like Kate Thornton every time something exciting popped on screen, ("Ooh, look, *look*!") – we're completely lost for words.

Problem? Excitable praise feels too disrespectful. Serious analysis feels too scientific. *God of War* is so good – fusing complicated elements into an intuitive radiant whole – it's humbling. Like a glorious sunset, a smile from a pretty girl or Diego Maradona's *proper* goal in Mexico 1986 – some moments are so poetically sublime that any attempt to define them seems vulgar and inarticulate. As a crowd gathered around *God of War*'s thrilling opening scenes, the knowing glances and wry smiles betrayed impish glee. *Everyone* wanted to wrestle away the pad and show the world How It's Done.

OK, sorry. Let's be objective. *("Did we mention that you can snap people in half with your bare hands...?")* Ancient Greece was famously innovative, but the ancient Greece of *God of War* is openly derivative. Sony's adventure pays 'homage' to the crisp and hierarchical combat system of *DMC3*, the acrobatic puzzling and daunting scale of *Prince of Persia*, the soul sucking mechanic and set pieces of *Onimusha 3* – and whips off its shirt to reveal a crude pencil sketch of the rhythmic action from *Dance Dance Revolution* and frantic button-mashing of *Athens 2004*. *("...and they struggle in your hands until they pop in a shower of blood...")* Talent borrows, genius steals – and *God of War* is an Aladdin's cave of pilfered money shots *("...making them look solid and believable, leaving you grinning like a powerful madman? No?")*

Good news: *God of War* has the most breathtaking introduction – and very almost the most dramatic conclusion – of any game on PS2. Great news: the middle bit is (mostly) brilliant, too. Producer David Jaffe's – of *Twisted: Metal Black* fame – admiration of Japanese game design is evident the second you pick up the pad. *God of War* feels right, from the way you whack ◎ to unleash a disproportionately spectacular series of chain attacks, to the way you *hammer* ◎ to stuff a minotaur's sword into his mouth – mimicking his furious resistance.

PSM2 GOLD AWARD

MINOTAUR OF DUTY: Fail to block and you'll get smashed about like a rag doll.

BURN IN SEQ-HELL

Complete the game and you're treated to a trove of extras, including a teasing hint about the series' potential future direction – turns out that Kratos has a <censored> who's burning in hell planning his revenge. A PS3 release, surely? In the meantime, tackle the ten secret Challenges of the Gods, where you're asked to perform special tasks, like whacking men off platforms in order to win new outfits.

ART OF THE MATTER: **You get to see how the game was made, with a revealing voiceover from Producer David Jaffe.**

"GOD OF WAR IS SO GOOD, SO RADIANT, SO SUBLIME, IT'S RATHER HUMBLING"

TOP 5 GODS

- Aphrodite
- Zeus
- Gamblor
- Eric Cantona
- God

GAMEPIE

10% Grinning.
50% Hitting People.
5% Pushing blocks.
15% Mashing buttons.
20% Gawping.

PUBTALK

The smart arse thing to say down the boozer.

"Back in 600BC, the Greeks established the modern alphabet by introducing symbols for the vowel sounds and were the first society to employ a democratic political system – which offered scant consolation when the Romans conquered them in 146BC. Buggers."

The MON£¥$HOT

The first level is jaw dropping – you're wrestling full-screen hydras within five minutes – but the final battle is truly epic. We had to take off our jumper in order to mash the buttons fast enough to compete with Ares' grapple attacks.

OPTICAL ILLUSION

The visuals are astounding – several staff members thought the game was running on a rival jolly green console – with epic vistas to rival *Ico* or *Prince of Persia*. It's also possible to tweak the visuals in the Pause menu, toggling between bright, crisp visuals with rougher edges, and softer visuals with a warmer glow. It's exactly like the Trails effect in *GTA: Vice City* and we applaud Sony for given us the option. On a decent TV with a good SCART cable, mind, we'd always opt for sharper lines.

SOFTEN: OFF

SHARP OF THINGS TO COME: **We prefer the crisp bright lines of Soften: Off, even if the character outlines can look a little jaggy.**

SOFTEN: ON

BLUR WITCH PROJECT: **The smoothing effect of Soften: On gives the screen a vaseline smeared haze – a bit like *Prince of Persia*.**

EXTRAS! EXTRAS! EXTRAS!

Unlock And Load

■ Finish the game to unlock some genuinely interesting extras, including a Deleted Scenes documentary voiced by Producer David Jaffe, multiple 'making of' videos, web teaser trailers and the ultra-hard God mode – plus some teasing clues about a possible sequel.

PUSH AND SHOUT: Wrestle off the Gorgons' heads with bemani analogue stick twists.

EYE ON GIANT: Ares towers in the background and stomps around

The game reads your mind – not by doing what you want, but what you *need*. When you use a blistering combo attack to send one of your foes flying into the air, the action instinctively slows down, almost begging you to leap up and grab him. Even then, your options are only limited by your imagination – you could slash furiously, slam him around like a yo-yo or drag him to the deck before jabbing his ugly mug with blades.

The 'busywork' of cracking heads never wanes. You've got four magic abilities – including a monster-freezing Medusa ray, long-range Zeus firebolt and the Army of Hades (giving you personal bodyguards like the army of the undead in Lord of the Rings: Return of the King) – with more than four upgrades; ever expanding in scale, power and combo potential. By the end of the game, almost every button combination yields a different attack flurry – causing the screen to

COMBAT EVOLVED

Combat borrows from *Devil May Cry*, but in addition to combo building, you're asked to perform rhythm-action-style sequences to disable larger foes. For example, to defeat the Gorgons, you need to weaken them with normal blows, tap ◎ to grapple 'em, then use analog stick rotations to twist off their heads. The set-piece takedowns really come into their own against huge foes like the ogres or the multi-headed hydras.

GORGON RAMSAY: Use Medusa's head to turn enemies into stone, then smash them up for a quick kill.

IN-SPECTRE GADGET: Use Army of Hades to conjure a posse of undead soldiers – invaluable when surrounded.

SOUL MAN: You suck up souls automatically – unlike *Onimusha* – and exchange them for weapon upgrades.

BITE MY FIRE: An on-screen prompt invites you to whack ◎ and ram the sword home.

MUMMY HILL: Kratos can scale, climb, jump, swim and swing on ropes.

EXPLOSIVE LOVE: Fat lardy-sortly balancing missions are a welcome change of pace.

PUZZLE ME THIS

Offended by grizzly decapitations? Fret not – you also get to push around crates and pull switches. On the bright side, puzzles are generally well pitched. For example, you need to rotate a crossbow 180° to shatter a door, but the floor panel only moves 90°. Solution? Rotate the crossbow 90°, drag it off the floor panel, reset the switch, drag the crossbow back and rotate again. It's like all good puzzles, really – easy *when* you know how.

CROSS YOUR HEART: The crossbow can smash open locked doors and take out larger foes – you can drag it about too.

BREAST IN SHOW: There's a 'special' bemani minigame...

POT TO TROT: Match button prompts to score some souls.

EYE DON'T BELIEVE IT: The cyclops need to be knocked to their knees, then Kratos can climb up and deliver the fatal blow.

"EPIC AND UNPARALLELED – GOD OF WAR IS THE BEST ACTION GAME ON PS2"

detonate like a firework disco – which can be chained into a skilful 456 hit lethal ballet. It's almost like *PES4*. Simple to pick up, sublimely nuanced and divinely balanced – but smart enough to let you revel in the dumb ultraviolence without having to constantly check the manual for complex button combinations.

Even 'dead' sections are exciting since smashed scenery yields red orbs to power up your weapons. The graphics wouldn't look out of place on Xbox, the scale of the exteriors rivals *Ico* – check the *full-screen* Ares roaming in the background as multiple foes attack you in the exploding ruins of Athens – and the soundtrack teeters manipulatively between subtlety and menace. Combos are explicitly rewarded (like *DMC*), while heading off the beaten track always yields rewards. We don't have the space, vocabulary or time to do it justice. And that's key – it's because *God of War* took three years to make, that the developers had time to squeeze *everything* they wanted to say into ten merciless hours – screwed vacuum tight by merciless playtesting, without any filler of flabby excess.

Obligatory complaints paragraph: the fixed camera promotes scale and amplifies drama, but occasionally obscures the action. Some of the puzzles are slightly obscure – asking you to apply lateral thought, but without any logical prompting (we're looking at you, 90° floor-twisting crossbow puzzle with red-herring broken switch) – the Pandora's Box section lacks the sprawling majesty of earlier levels, while the rotating death tube climb at the end (just you wait) is simply cruel and blighted by (in your impatient mind at least) unfair collision detection.

Yin. Yang. Early in the PS2's lifespan, Sony Japan gave us the exquisite *Ico* – an epic adventure defined by empty environments and an aching sense of personal fragility. Late in the PS2's lifespan, Sony America gives us the bombastic *God of War* – an epic adventure defined by dense environments and an unparalleled sense of personal empowerment. If you think of every *almost*-great action game on PS2 as martyrs, then *God of War* is the religion they sacrificed themselves to protect. Why didn't we write about it earlier? Sony Europe's lacklustre promotional push and our own pompous preconceptions about US-developed games after the so-so *Mark of Kri*. We might've skipped the sermon, and for that we beg forgiveness, but *God of War* is the best action game on PS2. Amen to that. **Daniel Dawkins**

■ *Pay homage to Sony's Greek God this June.*

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY

+ Intuitive, multi-tiered and hugely satisfying.
– Puzzles can get a bit annoying.

GRAPHICS

+ Stunning animation, epic bosses and vivid spot-effects. Gorgeous.
– Camera can be wonky.

SOUND

+ Crunchy impacts and perfect mood music.
– Voice acting a bit 'important'.

LIFESPAN

Multiple difficulty options, plus challenge modes as well, means it'll take 10-15 hours to see all of *God of War*.

MINUTES — YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN... DEVIL MAY CRY 3

IT'S WORSE THAN... METAL GEAR SOLID 3

Brutally satisfying, with exquisite graphics and intoxicating atmosphere – it's the best action game on PS2 and honed tighter than the torso of Adonis.

92

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS

Developer: Midway
Publisher: Midway
Players: 1
Memory Save: 183KB
Widescreen: No
50-60Hz: No
Surround Sound: Yes

TOP FIVE WORST TELEVISION ALIENS

- ALF (from, erm, ALF)
- Zig and Zag (Big Breakfast)
- Moxx of Balhoon (Dr Who)
- The Mysterons (Captain Scarlet)
- Mork (Mork and Mindy)

QUESTION...

Why is the restricted zone called Area 51?

GAMEFAX

FPS
Sci-Fi
Network Play
Hard

TRIVBURST

- Mutate between human and alien forms.
- Battle it out with up to 16 players in online mode
- Voice acting courtesy of scary goth Marilyn Manson and David 'X-Files' Duchovny.

The MON£Y $HOT
Firing off the plasma grenade is great, but watching the human autopsy as you wander through the spaceship is an even nicer, if grusome, touch.

PSM2 BRONZE AWARD

TOP BOMBING

Ultimately, there isn't a fantastic amount of weaponry on offer, but if there's a better grenade than the *Area 51* plasma bomb, then we'll eat our ass. Rather than lobbing it in the general direction of the space invaders, you can aim it at any direction and it will fly like an exploding dart. Not only that, it has a secondary explosion which can take out any stragglers that it missed the first time. Brilliant. And you also get a rebounding laser-guided pulse rifle. Perfect for shooting creatures hiding round corners.

WEAVE IT OUT: Ducking and diving are far better than blocking

"THE HYPE TO THE TRUTH"

GUNS DO KILL PEOPLE: Well this set of assault rifles certainly do.

DOES MY BOMB LOOK BIG?: The plasma grenade kills upon impact and explodes into this blue mist to wipe out the rest.

AREA 51

Well, it's here. And it's not as good as we'd hoped. Arse.

Unlike the US government's 'deny all knowledge' approach when asked about the existence of the restricted area in the Nevada desert, we're not going to dance around the truth – *Area 51*, despite our hopes, isn't the be-all-and-end-all of first-person-shooters. Of course, we wanted it to be the pinnacle of PS2 blasters, but when it comes down to it, Midway's latest outing simply doesn't do enough that's original or different.

With FPS's being ten-a-penny these days, you could argue that developers are finding it increasingly difficult to squeeze new ideas into a heavily contested market. Unfortunately, what new ideas *Area 51* has are short-lived and, ultimately, a tad disappointing, but we'll elaborate on that later. So how has a game we've been championing for ages failed to deliver the wealth of gaming joy we'd expected? Let us explain.

"AREA 51 SIMPLY DOES NOTHING THAT'S ORIGINAL ENOUGH"

Things start off excellently. You're plunged straight into the crux of the action as Ethan Cole, a member of Hazteam Bravo, voiced by David Duchovny. With nothing more than a briefing about weird goings-on and a shallow introduction to your team-mates, you're soon chasing a demented alien/human hybrid around the barracks of the underground base. Tracking down and killing this mentalist is played out through step-by-step control options (run toward barrels, and your prompted to hit L1 to leap over them.) A tutorial mode, then, but without being too condescending. Then, once you're off the reins, it's time to work your through the myriad of industrial corridors and labs with your fully-functioning AI chums watching your back all the way. But then

GAMEPIE

30% Shooting human 'aliens'.
20% Scuttling down narrow corridors
30% Wishing there were more weapons.
20% Chasing Greys.

ANSWER

Because '51' is the grid reference of the Nevada Test Site, dumbass. Sheesh, everybody knows that one, surely?

MONSTER MASH: These mutant creatures come from all angles.

EXTRAS! EXTRAS! EXTRAS!

Video Messaging

■ While trekking around the levels, you can scan top secret files to unlock video clips of in-game characters. These movie shows add another level of depth to the main storyline. A nice touch that builds mood.

ALIENS? MORE LIKE ALANS

If you were to imagine an alien, how would it appear? Twelve tentacles? Three grotesquely-sized heads? Or would they be 6ft 7" humanoids in black and electric-blue PVC suits and brandishing shotguns? Well, if the developers of *Area 51* are to be believed then these man-like figures are probing redneck simpletons right now. Apart from the bug-eyed grey aliens (and a few bubbles and crab-like creatures), this game is laden with tall *men*. It's like rewriting Aliens and pitting Sigourney Weaver against the Harlem Globetrotters. Jeez.

YOU GOT MALE: Look at him. He's not very 'alien' like is he? Two arms. Two legs. Where's the acid-spitting reptilian head?

CONTAIN YOURSELF: The environments are littered with vials of crazed aliens.

NEON THE BALL: The levels are well lit thanks to the fluorescent lights.

something terrible happens. Within minutes, your team – who you've just become accustomed to – are murdered. No big deal, huh? We'll just plod on regardless? Yes, but this means the camaraderie you shared with your chums is replaced with a sense of sheer loneliness. Popping up from behind a desk and taking out some charging mutants is exciting for the first few levels, but with gunfire and alien howls as the only sounds filling the air, you soon start to miss the company. In fact, almost every human character you come across inevitably meets a gruesome end within minutes.

Area 51 is a devious game. The first few levels are not only filled with the aforementioned squad members, but also cool little touches that lead you to believe the rest of the game is going to offer more and more. Like the first time you use a severed hand to open the armoury doors or when you get to man a huge gun turret and take out hordes of crazed monsters. The excitement escalates and all the while possibilities for new weapons and set-pieces sets your mind into overdrive. But as the game draws on, it becomes apparent that it's not going to happen. Even when you do get hold of the alien weaponry (See TOP BOMBING), it doesn't really change the gameplay.

"A SUPERB ONLINE MODE THAT EVEN SMASHES THE LIKES OF SPLITTERS: FUTURE PERFECT"

It all plays out at a cracking pace, however, as aliens crawl out from every crevice, making you press your ass against every wall just to cut off any attacks from behind. We'd have been even more impressed if the targeting system wasn't so erratic, though. We're happy to see off the oncoming monsters with wild strafing, but sometimes – especially with the shotguns – point-blank shots are frustratingly wide of the mark. You can morph into a mutant after being infected by an alien – a few levels in – and scratching the enemies' eyes out and firing gravity-defying squids (honestly) is fun for a while but there's never any actual need to become an alien so why bother?

While *Area 51* isn't a terrible game, and in some parts highly entertaining, we were expecting more than a simple FPS romp with a story seemingly lifted from a decidedly weak late night B-movie. But it does have a superb online mode which smashes even the likes of *Timesplitters: Future Perfect* with it's sixteen-player action. And with more loose ends left over than a prosthetic limb recycling bin, there's almost certainly going to be a second outing. Here's hoping *Area 52* (hey, why not?) improves on what's certainly a sound, but ultimately disappointing, beginning to the series. **Nathan Irvine**

■ *Invade* **Area 51** *from May 20th.*

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY	GRAPHICS	SOUND
+ Relentless, frantic run 'n' gun action. – The best bits peter out as the game progresses.	+ Brilliantly designed sci-fi surroundings. – Cluttered areas make it feel claustrophobic.	+ Nice gun sounds and character speech. – Marilyn Manson plays a particularly weak role.

LIFESPAN

Plenty to unlock, plus the sixteen player online mode that'll keep you zapping enemies for weeks. Just a shame the story's so short.

MINUTES

IT'S BETTER THAN...
BEING ANALLY PROBED

IT'S WORSE THAN...
TIMESPLITTERS: FP

We honestly wanted this to be a *Killzone* beater, but it hasn't delivered on its promise. Fun, but too short. Only worth it for the online mode, really.

79

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Develoiper: Sony
Publisher: Sony
Players: 1-8
Memory Save: 142kb
Widescreen: No
50-60Hz: No
Surround Sound: Yes

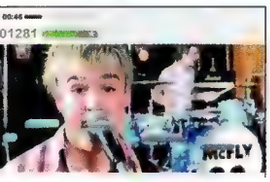
PUBTALK
The smart arse thing to say down the boozer.
"There's a similarity between Father And Son and the Flaming Lips' Fight Test. The Lips ended up having to fork over part of their royalities."

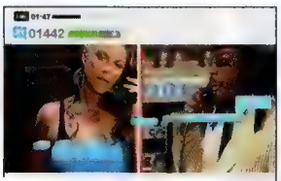
GAMEPIE
10% Who's 'Annie'?
15% Trying the Spanish in Should I Stay.
25% 'Admiring' Beyoncé.
50% Playing *Singstar Party* instead.

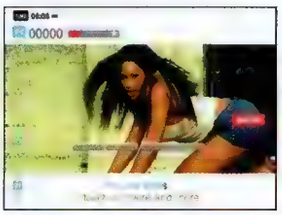
GAMEFAX
Eyetoy
Saucy
Multiplayer
Licensed

TRIVBURST
- Voice Filters.
- Duet, Pass The Mic and Team Battle modes.
- New 'Rap' scoring and Medley mode.
- 30 songs for your drunken entertainment.

SHOULDN'T BE ALOUD: **Love Machine's harder to sing than you think.**







"AT LEAST THERE'S **NO STEVE JONES**"

I'M ON NEXSHTT

Genre-boundaries are fleeting. What really subdivides songs in the noble art of karaoke is simply this – how drunk you have to be to sing them. Here, for your convenience, we present the entire tracklist.

FIDGETING NERVOUSLY
Beyonce – Crazy in Love
Tom Jones – It's Not Unusual
Dandy Warhols – Bohemian Like You
Marilyn Manson – Personal Jesus
Keane – Somewhere only we know
The Hives – Main Offender
Joss Stone – Super Duper Love (Are You Digging On Me?)

LOOSENING UP
Avril Lavigne – Sk8er Boi
Jamelia – Stop
Natasha Bedingfield – These Words
Robbie Williams – Let Me Entertain You
Erik B and Rakim – Paid in Full
Kylie Minogue – In Your Eyes

DANCING WITH MIC
Blink-182 – What's My Age Again?
Outkast – Roses
McFly – Obviously
The Clash – Should I Stay or Should I Go?
Steppenwolf – Born to be Wild

CHATTING UP THE PLANT
Girls Aloud – Love Machine
Black Eyed Peas – Shut Up
Good Charlotte – I Wanna Live
Fountains of Wayne – Stacy's Mom
Robbie Willams & Kylie Minogue – Kids

DROOLING ON THE CARPET
Annie – Heartbeat
Ashlee Simpson – Pieces Of Me
Jay Sean – Eyes on You
Manfred Mann – Do Wah Diddy
Hoobastank – The Reason
Ronan Keating & Yusuf Islam – Father and Son
Sister Sledge – We Are Family

SINGSTAR POPWORLD

Let me entertain you? Well, whenever you're ready, Robbie...

Just think how beautiful this could have been. Cheeky, non-threatening Simon giving your slurred performances a cheerful reaming when you did bad. Flirty, giggly Miquita raising a coquettish eyebrow and flashing a smile when you did good. Smug, insufferable Steve Jones for the ladies. If you're the sort of person who stays up until three in the morning singing songs into your PlayStation, it's a fair bet that you're also acquainted with the hangover-easing pastel majesty of Popworld – and so it's a crashing disappointment that the presenters' involvement's limited to a 'can-I-have-my-cheque-now' intro.

Further proof that *Popworld*'s just a shark-eyed exercise in 'synergistic co-branding'? The track list. Given the tag, you'd expect an achingly hip combination of rap-lite, indie rock and messy-haired boy-punk – what you get's the usual wedding disco selection, padded out by songs that Sony probably got on the cheap. Worse, popularity is given precedence over performability – so, yeah, while Should I Stay Or Should I Go might be technically The Clash's best tune, it's hardly the one to try belting out after six pints of Angerbrau. An even bigger oversight is Erik B and Rakim's Paid In Full – lethargic rapping with a minute-long intro that doesn't come close to the duo's version of I Know You Got Soul for party vibes. The new rap-o-meter works better than anything in *Get On Da Mic*, but it's only present in a handful of songs, and the robo-tronic voice adaptation's only entertaining for about five minutes. There's still no option to score the 'freestyle' sections (the Spanish bit from Should I Stay, for instance), making them fundamentally pointless. Unlike *Party*, *Popworld* doesn't add anything as essential as Duet to the formula, so whether you need it's entirely down to how much you like the songs. And, well...

Let's face it, it's an indictment of *Popworld* that after barely two hours of playing it we ended up digging out the original *Singstar* for the crowd and hollering away on that instead. With two games-worth of selection-box tunes available, it simply must be time for Sony to start releasing mid-price genre-specific updates by now. After all, do you know anyone with Ronan Keating *and* Personal Jesus (the *Marilyn Manson* version) in their karaoke repertoire? And if you do, would you *really* want to invite them to your party? Somehow, we doubt that the lovely Miquita would approve. **Joel Snape**

■ Popworld *is out May 13th.*

02:58
00000
The MON£Y $HOT
Playing *Popworld* was the first time we'd seen the video for Stacy's Mom. Of course, we've given it serious study since. With the sound on mute.
Wrong - - -
I'm in love with

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY	GRAPHICS	SOUND
+ Precision singing maybe easier than before. – Doesn't really add anything worthwhile.	+ Beyonce, Jamelia and the Stacy's Mom video. – Ronan Keating – so bland we gagged.	+ All the original artists. Lovely. – Some song choices are downright bizarre.

LIFESPAN
The least strong line-up in any *Singstar* we've seen. Bah. It's only fun until the novelty of the new songs wears off.
MINUTES — YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
GET ON DA MIC
IT'S WORSE THAN...
SINGSTAR: PARTY

A sequel too far for a game that needs to start catering to niche tastes, *now*. Bring out *Singstar: Indie Bands With Stupid Names Edition*, pronto.

70

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DOLBY PRO LOGIC II
PlayStation 2

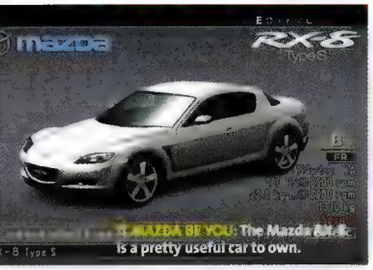
INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: Konami
Publisher: Konami
Players: 1-2
Memory Save: 462kb
Widescreen: No
50-60Hz: No
Surround Sound: No

PREVIOUSLY IN PSM2...
"SO STIFF AND SERIOUS IT MAKES GRAN TURISMO LOOK LIKE WACKY RACES"
PSM2#61

GAMEFAX
Driving: Realistic
Original: Hard

TRIVBURST
- More than 200 cars from the past 30 years.
- Visual Gravity System gives instant feedback on stresses placed on car.
- The usual career, free ride and training modes.



I, MAZDA BE YOU: The Mazda RX-8 is a pretty useful car to own.

SAND IN YOUR EYES: The sand and dust [illegible] are nice.

PIT TALK: If you're doing well, you'll get messages like this on-screen.

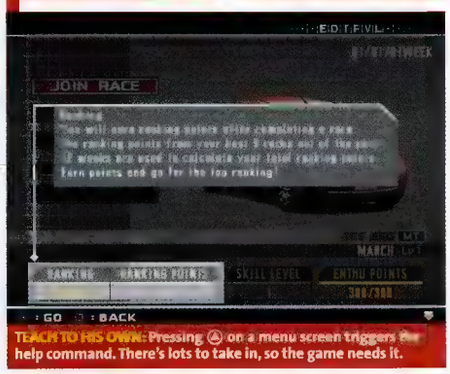
The MON£Y $HOT
Detailed car models, nut-crunching physics and some exceptionally lovely scenery. You can't say that *Enthusia*'s not gorgeous.

LET'S DO THE MATH!

There are several figures to keep your eye on in Life mode's game time. The main one you'll be concerned with is your Ranking Points total. This is calculated each race, using such variables as where you finished, the race's difficulty and the odds on your car winning (ie, place your weaker car higher than better ranked opponents to increase your Ranking Points faster). You'll also build up Skill Points, which are dished out based on your performance in a race. These eventually lead to the 'levelling up' of your car and better tuning options.

SKILL BILL: Switch off aids to max your score.

SATISFYING RANK: Climb the table, week by week.



TEACH TO HIS OWN: Pressing Ⓐ on a menu screen triggers the help command. There's lots to take in, so the game needs it.

PLANE TO SEE: Planes roar past overhead. It's all very pretty.

"A SERIOUS RACER FOR VERY SERIOUS PEOPLE"

ENTHUSIA: PROFESSIONAL RACING

In their drive for racing realism, have Konami left any room for any fun?

There must be a few nastily-gnawed fingernails at Polyphony Digital. While Kazanori Yamauchi's team might have coughed up their coffee at other developers' laughable attempts to elbow their *Gran Turismo* series off the top of the podium, *Enthusia Professional Racing* comes close to actually doing it.

Rather than rolling out an off-the-production line, me-too racing sim, Konami have tried to offer a genuine alternative. Yes, it's cast from the same mould as *GT4* – hundreds of cars from the present and past, a 'career' mode and a series of driving tests – but it introduces some market-friendly new features.

Chief of these is the 'groundbreaking' Visual Gravity System (VGS), which allows you to see how the forces of inertia are acting on your car. This is vastly improved over an earlier version, which used basic arrows to indicate the centrifugal force on the vehicle. The finished game features a circle and four rectangles (representing your tyres) in the centre of the screen. A yellow ball moves around

"ENTHUSIA COMES CLOSE TO KNOCKING GT4 FROM ITS SPOT ON THE PODIUM"

QUESTION...
Which member of the PSM2 team recently bought his *third* Vauxhall Corsa?

GAMEPIE
60% Comparing it to *Gran Turismo* (for better or for worse).
15% Learning not to hit things.
15% Hitting things.
10% Complex menus.

ANSWER
Daniel Griffiths. This is a man who could tell you the kerb weight of a Nissan Skyline, but pootles about town like a shaky vicar.

"GETTING A DECENT SET OF WHEELS MIGHT PROVE A LITTLE FRUSTRATING"

TREE AND EASY: Whirling through the countryside is enjoyable.

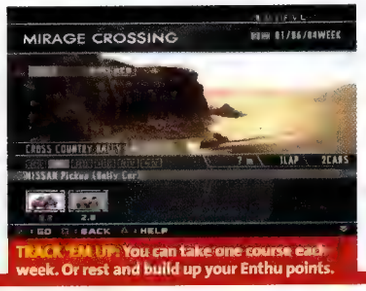
AIL AND PACE: *Enthusia*'s quite quick – but maybe not quick enough...

RENDER AND STIMPY: The car models are certainly rendered beautifully.

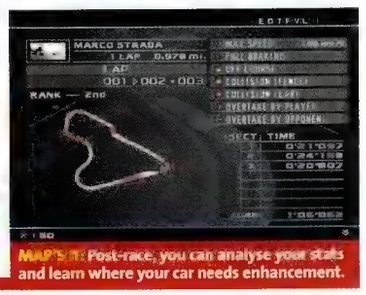
KERB YOUR ENTHUSIA

You can opt to 'rest' in one of the game weeks in order to fully replenish your car's Enthu points. You'll eventually want to tune your motor as well. There are seven parameters to alter, including basics such as height and gear ratio, and each is adjusted by a sliding scale. You can view the effect it has on steering, speed and overall performance as you do so, so it's easy for beginners to enjoy themselves here.

TUNER FISH: Increase or decrease the main slider and watch how it affects performance.



TRACK 'EM UP: You can take one course each week. Or rest and build up your Enthu points.



MAP'S IT: Post-race, you can analyse your stats and learn where your car needs enhancement.

within this to indicate the forces at work. Turn sharply right, for instance, and the dot'll thump to the left of the readout. The tyres also change colour from a default grey to reveal the state of traction – white to show plenty of grip, red to reveal that you're losing control.

In practice, though, we found it distracting, especially when using the external view. The time Konami have spent refining the (truly) outstanding car physics means that you can get plenty of feedback from the movement of the car, the way it rolls, the convincing sensation of weight. You know when you're likely to lose the back end round a bend because you can feel it happening. Maybe the VGS can stop reaching that point in the first place, but isn't that killing the thrill of racing? Luckily, a dab of ◎ can remove it from the screen.

Enthusia certainly encourages you to drive with precision and in Driving Revolution mode, it attempts to teach you. While *GT*'s licences are achieved by taking part in real-world set-ups, *Enthusia*'s 'lessons' can't help but remind you it's a game. They revolve around driving through course sections, hitting markers at a variety of speeds and positions. Unfortunately, this doesn't serve as a great teaching aid – your mind's focused more on matching the required speed for the gates; treating it as a game rather than a way to learn how to really crack cornering or handling at speed.

You need to make sure you're familiar with your chosen car's handling, though – *Enthusia* punishes sloppiness. Enthusia Life, the game's equivalent to career mode, is where this is most evident. If you're to progress, you'll need to hold onto, and ultimately increase, your 'Enthu' points. These are what amount to 'hit points', which you lose through driving like a loon. Clip the edge of a track or barrel your opponents out of the way, a la *Gran Turismo*, and your Enthu bar drops into the red. Irritatingly, you also lose points for being shunted up the rear by an opponent. Why? At least the rival drivers aren't complete dumb-ass drones – they'll try and avoid a collision where possible.

Lose all your Enthu points and, rather than exploding in a shower of brake dust and oil, you have to miss a week's racing, which can affect your ranking. And ranking points. And skill level. And... There's far too many stats to get your head around (there's a full-time help system on tap). Unusually, you don't earn cash in order to buy new motors. You're randomly awarded one of the cars you've just beaten in a race (or none at all, if the scrolling selection highlight you trigger doesn't stop on one). Getting a decent set of wheels might therefore prove a little frustrating.

Ultimately, it's tricky to know who *Enthusia*'s aimed at. The 'Professional' tag hints at the committed driving fan, and the attention to detail in the physics engine, VGS and the tactical, no-knocks-please nature of Life mode back this up. But we can't help feeling that the lottery-style garage filling and the fact that it takes so long to reach the tougher opponents will turn some of the petrol-heads off a little. **Marcus Hawkins.**

■ Enthusia *is out May 6th.*

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ Hugely realistic controls and physics.
– VGS system proves largely redundant.

GRAPHICS
+ Lots of interesting track details to see.
– Not as sharp or detailed as *GT4*.

SOUND
+ Some of the music's original enough.
– But some awful cock-rock and car sounds.

LIFESPAN
Enthusia Life mode is a reasonable investment of time if you're prepared to drive safely. No online mode – no surprise there.
MINUTES — YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
JUICED

IT'S WORSE THAN...
GRAN TURISMO 4

Superficially, *Enthusia* is trying to do the *GT* sim thing. But it's attempting to inject some pine-scented freshness into a stale genre – and it doesn't succeed.

7

INFOTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: Blue 52
Publisher: Hip Interactive
Players: 1
Memory Save: 73kb
Widescreen: No
50-60Hz: No
Surround Sound: No

PUBTALK
The smart arse thing to say down the boozer.
"The biggest robbery that ever happened was at New York Airport in 1978, when a gang made off with 5.8 million dollars."

GAMEPIE
10% Stealing things
80% Unrelenting boredom
10% Wondering why people bother making games like this one.

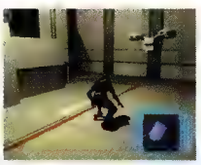
GAMEFAX
Action adventure
Original
Shit
PC Game

TRIVBURST
- Stealing and stealth combined.
- Use hi-tech tools and gadgets.
- "Some intense action sequences!" Or so says the press release, falsely.

The MON£Y $HOT
Here's your cat-burgling heroine, Anya. She slots nicely into the 'cool, sexy, dangerous' stereotype of all game ladies. And as such, is a bit boring.
WATCH IT ON THE DVD VIDEO

"SCAT BURGLAR"

STOLEN



It's *Splinter Cell*, but with thievery and a girl character! A shame, then, that it's all executed so very, very badly.

The simple fact that such a great premise has been done so badly is a crime in itself. *Stolen* is about jewellery heists, a felony that, unlike normal, petty burglary, is impossibly glamorous. Heists call to mind brooding, beautiful people sneaking around high-security buildings, dodging guards, sneering at security cameras and then casually strolling away with bags of jewels without so much as a backward glance. Unfortunately, *Stolen* has taken this idea, broken its back, kicked it in the bag, and left it a wheezing, crippled shell of its former self.

It's not that there's any one big thing wrong with *Stolen*, it's just that there's endless small flaws that overwhelm the whole experience and leave it in the gutter. There's the frame-rate. You might think that by this stage in the PS2's life cycle, developers could have managed to master the task of getting their games to run smoothly, but not the people behind *Stolen*. If you're running in a straight line, it's fine, but if you have the audacity to move the camera, well, you're in for more lurches than an Addams Family lookalikes convention. And it's not as if graphically *Stolen*'s really doing much. It's mainly black, with flat textures – nothing to force this judderiness.

Then there's the stealth elements. Oh, you can crouch round corners, shuffle past guards, sneak up behind them and choke them out. You can do all that you should be able to in a decent stealth title, but why should you when you can go completely unpunished for simply meandering up to the guards and smacking them in the face until they fall over? If the hand-to-hand combat was decent, this might be fun – but it's just a case of hammering ⒶA until you eventually win. Sigh.

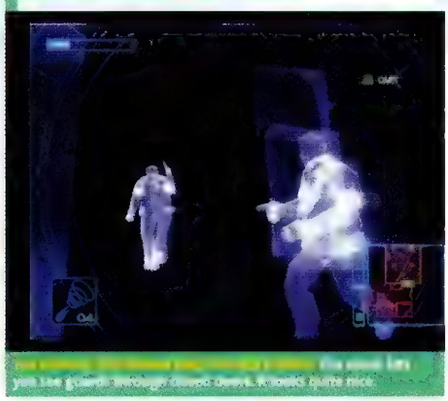
Little things. The fact that, if you start beating up a guard in the middle of his 'leaving through a door' animation, he won't turn round and attack. He'll simply amble away. The way that L2 is supposed to make you whistle to attract the enemies' attention (so you can leg it round a corner before they arrive, then sneak up and attack) but it simply doesn't. The 'invert camera axis' option on the menu screen doesn't work. Guards are instructed over radio to return to their posts because all's clear, even when they're eyeballing you.

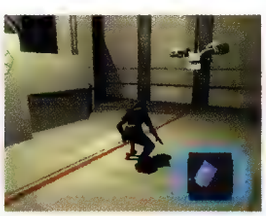
Still, even if all these problems had been ironed out, *Stolen* would still be a boring game, with none of the sleek grace of *Splinter Cell* or *Metal Gear*. It does nothing to rouse your interest at any point and is little more than a case of attacking guards and searching cupboards for loot. It's a complete waste of a good idea and should be left, unloved, on the shop shelves. **David Cook.**

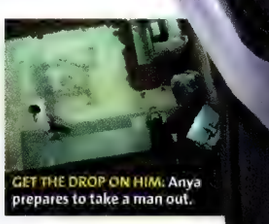
Stolen is out now.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

It's not all stealth and stealing, though. There's loads of other things. Well, three or four, at least. There's lockpicking, for instance – which is essentially a jigsaw puzzle a five-minute old baby could solve. There's also computer hacking – which involves replicating a pattern of flashing lights, for some reason, a la those Simon Says toys. You can use sonar equipment to see through doors and check out positions of guards, and you can nullify cameras with neutralisers. somehow, these also sedate guards. Hmm. Anyway, these are nice ideas, but they're fiddly to execute and they don't really add anything to the gameplay. Oh, well.







GET THE DROP ON HIM: Anya prepares to take a man out.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY	GRAPHICS	SOUND
Well, as we keep saying, it's a very good idea... ...but so badly executed, it defies belief.	Er... – Dark, bland and astonishingly juddery. All wrong, frankly.	+ Unexceptional. – Guards' radio instructions are bafflingly inaccurate.

LIFESPAN
You won't play *Stolen* for long, unless you get some sort of kick out of being bored and irritated.
MINUTES — YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
SPY VS SPY

IT'S WORSE THAN...
SPLINTER CELL 3

Stolen doesn't work properly. It's riddled with flaws and, even if you can somehow overlook them, it's boring and makes a mockery of its excellent concept. Dang.

3/8

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: Cavia
Publisher: Atari
Players: 1-4
Memory Save: 57kb
Widescreen: No
50-60Hz: No
Surround Sound: No

PUBTALK
The smart arse thing to say down the boozer.
The Ghost In The Shell TV series was produced by IG, the same people who did those anime sections in Tarantino's Kill Bill."

GAMEPIE
25% Feeling sleepy...
25% So very sleepy...
50% Zzzz...

GAMEFAX
Action
Manga
PS2 Exclusive
Multitap

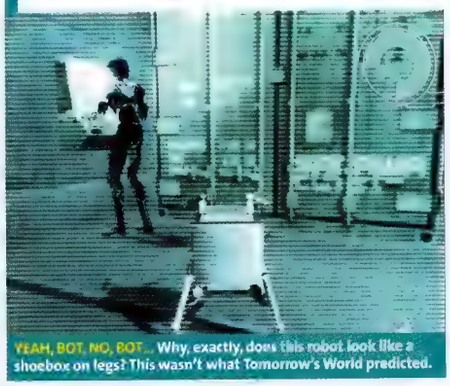
TRIVBURST
- Based round the anime TV series.
- 15 different weapons.
- Four-player battle royal mode.
- "Engaging" story mode. It says here.

TURRETS SYNDROME: Gun turrets, eh? 'Sparklingly original'. Cough.

The MONEY SHOT
Here, in a screenshot that misrepresents the game by almost looking interesting, we see Bateau and some robots. Nice ponytail, eh?

HACKED OFF

Computer hacking is a big deal in *Ghost In The Shell*. Try not to get too excited, though, because you don't actually do any yourself – it's done automatically. Still, this means you're occasionally 'treated' to segments like this, where you hack into this shoebox, sorry, robot and then use him to get to closed-off areas to open doors and suchlike. It's... well, it's rubbish to be honest. Never mind, eh? Why not go for a nice walk instead?



YEAH, BOT, NO, BOT... Why, exactly, does this robot look like a shoebox on legs? This wasn't what Tomorrow's World predicted.

"YOU'LL NEVER WALK ALONE – UNLESS YOU BUY THIS"

GHOST IN THE SHELL: STAND ALONE COMPLEX

What the hell does 'stand alone complex' mean, anyway? We'd like to care, but we feel... very... very... sleepy...

You've never been bored. Oh, you might think you have. You've suffered hours of algebra homework. You've sat through Songs of Praise, Last of the Summer Wine and the Antiques Roadshow of a Sunday Evening. You've listened to your Dido albums. You might even have played *Nano Breaker*. And you probably think each of these is a bit dull. But compared to the sheer, undiluted tedium that *Ghost In The Shell* foists upon your gaming plate, they're as exciting as a trip to Alton Towers on the moon. With Spider-Man.

This is Manga we're talking about here, remember. That'll be the most exciting, visceral, innovative, heart-pounding art form in the world today, then. OK, the Ghost In The Shell TV series – on which this game is based – isn't exactly the world's greatest, but the film itself is a superb example of just what anime can achieve. And Atari have picked up the license and come up with... this? This is what eager Manga fans are going to be shelling out actual money for? Frankly, we'd be disgusted, but we're so stupefied from actually playing it, we can't be arsed.

What developers Cavia have churned out is the most leaden, utterly formulaic platform-shooter you could possibly imagine. It's an astonishing waste of characters like the Major, Bateau and Tagosa, a waste of a good story – involving ghost criminals and suchlike – and, ultimately, a waste of your time. All that really happens is that you, controlling various different Ghost characters throughout, trundle around boring looking warehouses and dockyards, blasting successions of dumb guards – who'll quite happily stand around and get shot – and collecting key cards to open doors with.

To be brutally frank, there's almost nothing else to say. It all works, we suppose, despite the lack of intelligence from the guards, and the frustrating half-second lag between pressing jump and your character actually doing anything – leading to endless falling, followed by laborious clambering back up huge structures – but it's just so very boring. It's quite tough, but that's as much praise as we've the energy to muster. You really would have to be an absolute Manga nut, or a platform-shooter fanatic, to get any level of entertainment out of *Ghost In The Shell*. Us? We'd rather watch Dido's special guest appearance on Songs of Praise. Ah well, we can dream. **David Cook**

■ Shell *out for this now.*

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY	GRAPHICS	SOUND
+ Well, there is some. – But none of it's really worth experiencing for very long.	+ Functional enough. – Dark blue and grey. What an 'excellent' use of the colour spectrum.	+ Yep, it has some. – One character has the most irritating, squeaky voice we've ever heard.

LIFESPAN
It's quite big and it's quite challenging. But you won't care, because you'll be asleep within half an hour.
MINUTES — YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
HE-MAN

IT'S WORSE THAN...
GOD OF WAR

The next edition of the dictionary will define 'dull' with the words '*Ghost In The Shell*'. Still, if you want a really spot-on cure for insomnia, go right ahead.

4/7

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: Juice Studios
Publisher: THQ
Players: 1-6
Memory Save: 78KB
Widescreen: No
50-60Hz: No
Surround Sound: Yes

TOP FIVE JUICES
- Orange
- Cranberry
- Mango
- Pineapple
- Juice Lee

GAMEFAX

Driving | Addictive | Network Play | Original

TRIVBURST
- *Juiced* originally opened with an hilariously bad video from UK rapper Shystie, but now it doesn't.
- It features over 50 real-life cars and hundreds of tuning parts.

DOT.COM
www.juicegames.com Has barely more than a reference to the game. **http://thq.com/game.asp?1144|46065** bears a little more fruit.

The MON£Y $HOT
The giant alloys, the massive decals, the lairy paint and outrageous bodykits... it's all here. Oh, and the poor driving. Lots of that too.

"A TRIP TO KWIK-FIT MIGHT BE IN ORDER"

JUICED

Back, refreshed and... Re-Juiced? Juiced With Bits? What?

TRAVEL LIGHT: *Juiced* is at least original in racing days as often as nights. Still, there are no trams or volumes to consider...

It's been a long, hard road for *Juiced*. Essentially it began life as a licensed Lamborghini racer from a company called Rage, and was about to go on sale when Rage went bust. Picking up the pieces – but not the Lambo license – many of the creators moved on to form Juice Studios, building on their old technology, creating an entire tuning-car game world and signing up with publisher Acclaim. Just as *Juiced* was about to go on sale, Acclaim went bust...

At least this time around it survived relatively intact, having been salvaged whole from the wreckage by THQ, which so far has failed to go bust, explode into flames or fall into the hungry sea with the keys to the warehouse in its pocket. Fingers crossed. And in the time since it was last reviewed as an about-to-be-released Acclaim game, *Juiced* – pulped by a less-than-enthusiastic critical response – has been markedly tweaked, prodded and generally improved. So they say. Hence the new review you're reading now.

And we'd love to have some genuinely new conclusions about it, but its problems are – if anything – worse. That's not to say the redesign of the menu system hasn't made things better, or even that the game is especially bad. It's much less confusing to use now, as the betting, respect and crew systems are presented in a more visual way. Voice-overs and loading screen hints also provide useful pointers, and as a bonus it's more attractive too. No, most of *Juiced*'s problems now stem from the time it's taken to reach the shelves. It's clearly modelled on The Fast And The Furious (and lead character TK pretty much *is* Vin Diesel), but that film – and stealing its chops – is getting seriously old. TF&TF is the new Bullet Time. It's everywhere you look these days.

It wouldn't matter so much if new *Juiced* was a blast to play, but it sorely lacks the immediacy of its ultra-strong opposition. You still seem to spend hours looking at menus, studying numbers and squinting at meters to judge what everyone thinks of you, how fast their cars might be and where to spend your money. And once you do get into a race

"JUICED'S PROBLEMS ARE, IF ANYTHING, WORSE THAN BEFORE"

HANGING ON THE TELEPHONE

It's now almost law to have other racers contacting you via text/mobile/pda, and it's actually law to have a bit of product placement associated with it, or be punished by hanging. Probably. Anyway, *Juiced* asks you to select a real-life model of mobile phone right from the start of the game, presumably so you feel even more immersed in its world. But why no ringtone which, ironic or not, makes us want to strangle animals and even small children? That's not realistic.

QUESTION...
I like driving but I'm very responsible. Earlier I had a second Stella and I'm now too drunk to drive. Is there anything car-related that I can do?

GAMEPIE
10% Winning money.
50% Spending money.
20% Making your car look slick.
20% Racing.

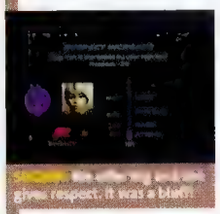
ANSWER
Yes. You can enter an event, bet on the outcome and simply watch it unfold. It's actually even legal to continue drinking as long as you don't drive.

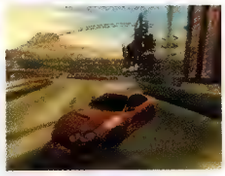
ARROWING EXPERIENCE: Colossal pointy things help send you in the right direction, but it's still tough to see corners sometimes.

NITROUS NIGHTY-NIGHT: Boosting into a wall is a possibly fatal idea. Still, it's a lovely effect – damage, however, isn't.

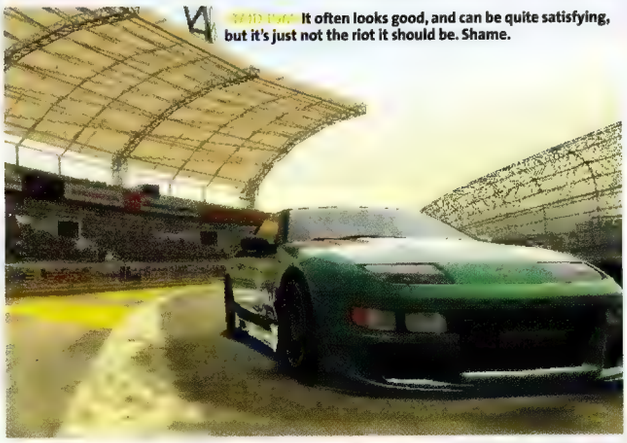
THE WAGERS OF SIN

It's possible to place wagers with anyone, and handily you'll be looking at the power output of their car when you make your decision. It's important to pay attention to the 'preferred' bet, as well – go lower and they'll scoff, while your all-important respect meter sags. A good trick, however, is to offer the maximum first. Chances are they'll turn it down, but you get respect just for asking in the first place. Then you can make the far lower one you planned all along...





ON THE MAP: The slightly top-down radar is a surprisingly useful innovation.



RACE HARD: It often looks good, and can be quite satisfying, but it's just not the riot it should be. Shame.

"BETTER THAN A YEAR AGO, BUT THE BAR LONG SINCE ROSE..."

it's still not quite as fun as it should be. The speed is good and the courses look great, but they're very old-school – tightly restricted twiddles with few really challenging corner complexes or memorable moments. As it happens, you'll be too busy fighting with your car anyway, as they remain less than joyful to use. The handling does feel slightly better – our cars seemed less prone to losing all speed to unstoppable yet pathetic half-spins, at any rate – but it's still ponderously at odds with the precision barrier-skimming that city racing should have. Cars need to be set on high-speed arcs well in advance of the corner, and if you get it wrong – say because you can't make out where the barrier even ends and the corner starts – there's little room for jazz. You're simply doomed to hit something when that happens, no matter how hard you try to steer out of it.

It's a shame, because the licensed car models look great and the customisation is excellent. Or, at least, it was. A year ago it was the best around, but time and tuning cars wait for no man. Both *Need For Speed Underground 2* (the unstoppable, all-comer crushing sales monster) and *Midnight Club 3* (the true daddy of custom racers) have eclipsed this. And don't even get us started on *Burnout*... Crucially, all three are also higher-paced both on and off track, and though they lack the team dynamic of organising crews, they all have better online modes, traffic and reputations that are much more superior in execution.

Like we said, it's a shame. The idea of stunts and scoring points for them (reputation points, naturally) *Tony Hawk's*-style is intriguing, but in practice it's slightly underwhelming – you're in a car and you just spin about doing fundamentally unimpressive twirls in the middle of the road. Furthermore, *Midnight Club 3* now lets you be far sillier, two-wheeling or bouncing along on hydraulics, say, just as a matter of course. Things have moved on, and *Juiced* didn't quite gel the first time it emerged for review nearly a year ago. This is slightly better – more accessible, more stylish, more playable – but the bar, sadly for it, has only risen higher still. Juice Studios quite probably have a great racing game in them, but *Juiced* just isn't it. Next time, perhaps. **Nathan Irvine**

Juiced can be squeezed now.

PSM VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ Betting and respect add some depth.
– But the driving is less fun than it should be.

GRAPHICS
+ Great cars and solid backgrounds.
– Characters not the strongest.

SOUND
+ Tunes beat EA Trax into a cocked hat
– Shystie's gone. We LOVED that track!

LIFESPAN
There's tons of content and a good online mode, but it's all too staid to warrant your persistence.
MINUTES — YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
JUICED (ACCLAIM)

IT'S WORSE THAN...
MIDNIGHT CLUB 3

Juiced is an easier and more attractive game to use now, but the flaws remain. Worse, the competition has pulled even further away, leaving *Juiced* at the back.

68

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: Midway
Publisher: Midway
Players: 1
Memory Save: 52KB
Widescreen: No
50-60Hz: No
Surround Sound: Yes

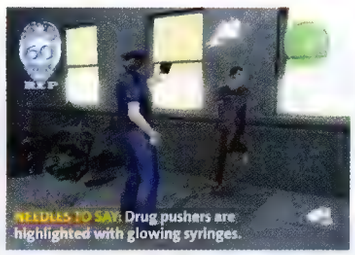
GAMEDIGIT
4
The number of games, Michael Madsen has lent his voice to: *GTA III* (Toni Cipriani), *True Crime* (Rafferty), *Driv3r* (Tanner) and now Jack Forzenski of *NARC*. He loves it!

GAMEPIE
25% Stealing drugs.
25% Selling drugs.
25% Taking drugs.
25% Disposing of drugs.

GAMEFAX
Action/
GTA Copy
Budget
Shit

TRIVBURST
- Choose your path as a good or bad cop.
- Soundtrack includes The Stranglers, Cypress Hill and Curtis Mayfield.
- Interrogate criminals. Or simply shoot them.

CUFFING HELL: Apprehending 'perps' is all about timing button presses.


NEEDLES TO SAY: Drug pushers are highlighted with glowing syringes.

"CALL THE COPS! IT'S A GAMING CRIME!"

NARC

The MON£¥ $HOT
Rugby tackling a fleeing 'perp', beating him within an inch of his life, before slapping the cuffs on his bruised ass. Rough justice, that.

ALLEY OOPS: "Sorry, my finger slipped. And again. And again."

Outlawed in Australia; we hope Britain does the same.

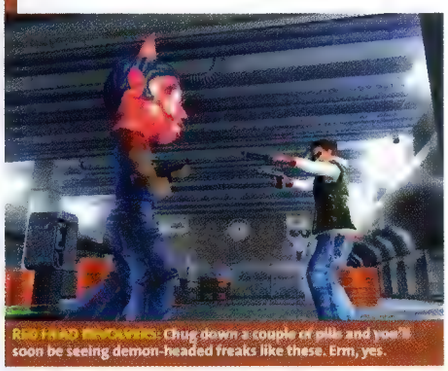
Unlike the windswept, red shoe-wearing Dorothy, Midway probably aren't that keen on Oz. Well, not after the Aussie censors took one look at *NARC* and slapped an embargo on it quicker than you can say "drugs anyone?". We're could, at this moment, spout all kinds of pretentious guff about how beautifully permissive our own country's censorship laws are. We won't though – because if they were more stringent, we wouldn't have to play this half-arsed street gang 'effort'. Yep, we're now officially pro-censorship. In this case, anyway. Britain could learn a lot from the Australians. They may make piss-weak lager, but banning crudular games sounds good to us.

To the layman, *NARC* looks like the younger, scruffier brother of *GTA*. Of course, that layman would have had to be living under a rock for the past decade and have no conception of decent games. But it does have similarities. Like, erm... there's a city full of independent pedestrians, and you get to fire shotguns and rocket launchers. Brilliant. Oh, and there are cars, but you can't get into them. Damn. So yes, it's just like *GTA*. But much more rubbish.

Unlike Rockstar's series, *NARC* isn't as open to free-roaming exploration as it should be. And when you do get the chance to look around, you'll soon be cursing the claustrophobic surroundings. It's a tiny city. More of a hamlet, really. And in this hamlet, you play Jack Forzenski (voiced by Michael Madsen) and Marcus Hill (some bloke from Any Given Sunday), two cops after the same thing – the supplier of a new street drug named, erm, 'liquid soul'. You soon become embroiled in all kinds of corrupt cop activity – using excessive force during arrests, for example, selling confiscated narcotics to the public or simply cuffing a tramp you've caught shooting up, before cold-heartedly slamming a bullet into the back of his head while he's helpless. Depends how brutal you are.

THE DRUGS DO WORK

Obviously we don't condone the taking of recreational drugs in real-life, but in *NARC*, it's great, with each of the illegal substances having an affect on your character. For example, stoking up a length of finely wrapped 'herbs' will induce a green mist and let your character see everything in slow motion. It's a bit like bullet-time and you can take out lethargic bad guys with ease. Speed makes you faster (natch) while taking crack will make you a crack shot, giving you aim of a true sharpshooter. But if you keep taking a particular drug, you become immune to its effect and you won't feel the benefit. A bit like wearing a coat indoors. Only not.


RED HEAD HALLUCINATIONS: Chug down a couple of pills and you'll soon be seeing demon-headed freaks like these. Erm, yes.

In a game so full of criminal activity (almost every citizen is a drug dealer), you're faced with a moral dilemma. Do you hand the contraband into police HQ or do you just find the nearest alley, get smacked off your t*ts and forget about the actually playing the game? Tough decision, eh? Well, you have to take the drugs, as it turns out (see THE DRUGS DO WORK), but it's little more than a (frankly strange) diversion.

In a way, we quite like NARC – there's a certain charm about the childish way such extreme violence and anti-social behaviour is dished up but the endless catalogue of problems makes it impossible. The glitchy animation, the repetitive soundtrack, the unresponsive control system, the high boredom factor... the list goes on. There's fun to be had and, at 20 notes, you could do worse, but once you're bored of what is a one-joke game, any appeal drains away. Australia really isn't missing out on anything. **Nathan Irvine**

■ NARC *is busting perps in stores right now*

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ All the action of *GTA*...
– ...without the vehicles. Or the excitement. Or the fun. Or anything.

GRAPHICS
+ There are some nice drug-induced effects.
– A massive glitch-fest. Too many to list.

SOUND
+ The soundtrack has a few decent songs on it...
– ...but they're repeated every two minutes.

LIFESPAN
The story mode is quite lengthy, so that should keep you going for a while. But you probably won't come back.
MINUTES — YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
BEING A CRACK ADDICT

IT'S WORSE THAN...
GTA: SAN ANDREAS

We like guns, we like city environments, and we like laughable drugs and violence references. AND we like arresting people. But we don't like *NARC*. No. Sorry.

45

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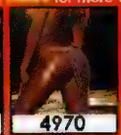
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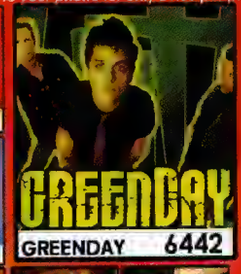
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BATMAN BEGINS 5158

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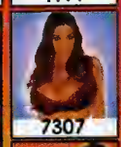
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SEXY! 7289

F430 6257

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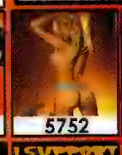
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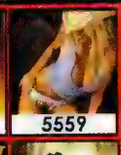
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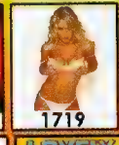
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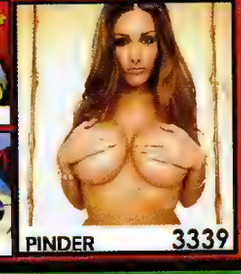
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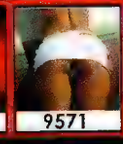
Demon 5771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9119	Britney Spears	Toxic	4253	McFly	Obviously
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6454	Christina Aguilera	Dirty	6268	Morrissey	There Is A Light That
3140	Ciara	Goodies	7460	Mylo	In My Arms ★
9109	D-12	How Come	4724	Natasha Bedingfield	Unwritten
6718	D12	My Band	7433	Oasis	Lyla ★
5629	Daft Punk	Robot Rock	8587	P.I.M.P.	50 Cent
2301	Dizzee Rascal	Stand Up Tall	9408	Peter Andre	Mysterious Gir.
2541	Elvis Presley	Jailhouse Rock	6266	Rob Thomas	Lonely No More
6115	Elvis Presley	Return To Sender	5872	Scooter	The Logical Song
6267	Elvis Presley	You're the Devil In	6270	Studio B	I See Girls
7415	Elvis Presley	Crying In The C ★	8388	Sunset Strippers	Falling Stars
7451	Eminem	Mockingbird ★	4674	The Game ft 50 Cent	How We
3636	Eminem	MOSH	7438	The Game Ft 50 Cent	Hate It ★
6271	Exhibit A	G Minor	6102	The Killers	Smile Like You Mean It
3997	Girls Aloud	I'll Stand By Yo..	6273	Tweet	Could It Be
2519	Girls Aloud	Wake Me Up	1094	Twista	Hope
6259	Gorillaz	De La Soul Feel Good..	2491	Usher	Caught Up
3567	Green Day	Holiday	6261	Weezer	Beverly Hills
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4690	Doves	Black White	9601	Angel City	Touch Me
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9283	Jet	Look What You've Done	0206	Robert Myles	Children
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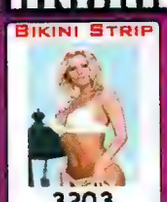
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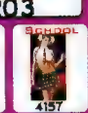
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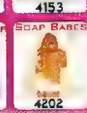
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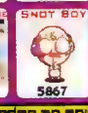
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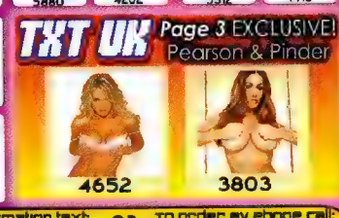
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INFOSTRIP

DETAILS

Developer: Travellers Tales
Publisher: Eidos
Players: 1 – 2
Memory Save: 61KB
Widescreen: No
50-60Hz: No
Surround Sound: Yes

TOP FIVE STAR WARS MUSIC TRACKS

- Yoda One That I Want – John Travolta & Olivia Newton-John
- Is This The Way To Amidala – Tony Christie
- I Should Be So Wookie – Kylie Minogue
- Anakin In The UK – The Sex Pistols
- It's Maul About You – McFly

GAMEFAX

Action/Adventure · Official · Film Tie-In · Easy

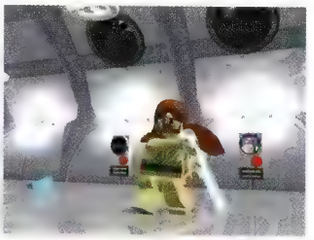
TRIVBURST

- Fight your way through the first three Star War Episodes.
- Unlock and play as any of the game's 56 characters.
- Ruin Episode III at the cinema by completing it in Lego form before you see it.

PSM2 BRONZE AWARD

The MON£¥ $HOT

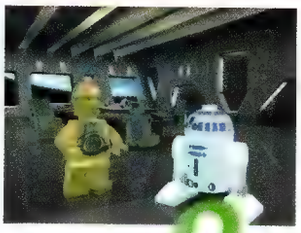
Although sending Jar Jar to a gruesome end is more satisfying, indulging in an impromptu lightsaber duel with a chum is also great.



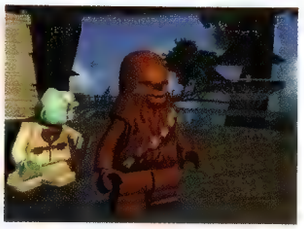
STUD 'U' LIKE

Smashing up an opponent or using The Force on certain object will shower the screen in multi-coloured studs. These studs can be used to buy things in Dexter's Diner (the staging area of the game), like gameplay hints, extra characters or wooden brooms, which can be used as lightsabers. Studs can also be used to unlock a secret level by filling your Jedi meter (situated at the top of the screen). You do this by gathering varying totals of studs on each level. Fortunately, you can go back in Free Play to nail those totals at your own leisure.

STAR BUYS: This is where you get to purchase all the extras that you can afford. You can also acquire hints and tips from here.



"IT'S A LEGO WONDERLAND"



LEGO STAR WARS

Two of our favourite things combine for one giant slice of fun.

OK, hands up all those people who admit to loving Star Wars? <Scribbles on imaginary clipboard> Good. Right, now put your hand up if you like Lego? Thank you. Finally, raise your hand if you would admit to harbouring strong feelings for both of these nerdish pastimes to a member of the opposite sex? Ah, not so keen now, eh? So you wouldn't be keen on something that combines the two? No? Well, you're wrong. Strangely a Lego/Star Wars hybrid isn't as socially crippling as you may think. In fact, having a copy of *Lego Star Wars* in your PS2 collection could mark you out as a smart connoisseur of quality games rather than an adult baby.

"WHEN THAT SCORE STRIKES UP, YOU'LL HAVE GOOSEPIMPLES"

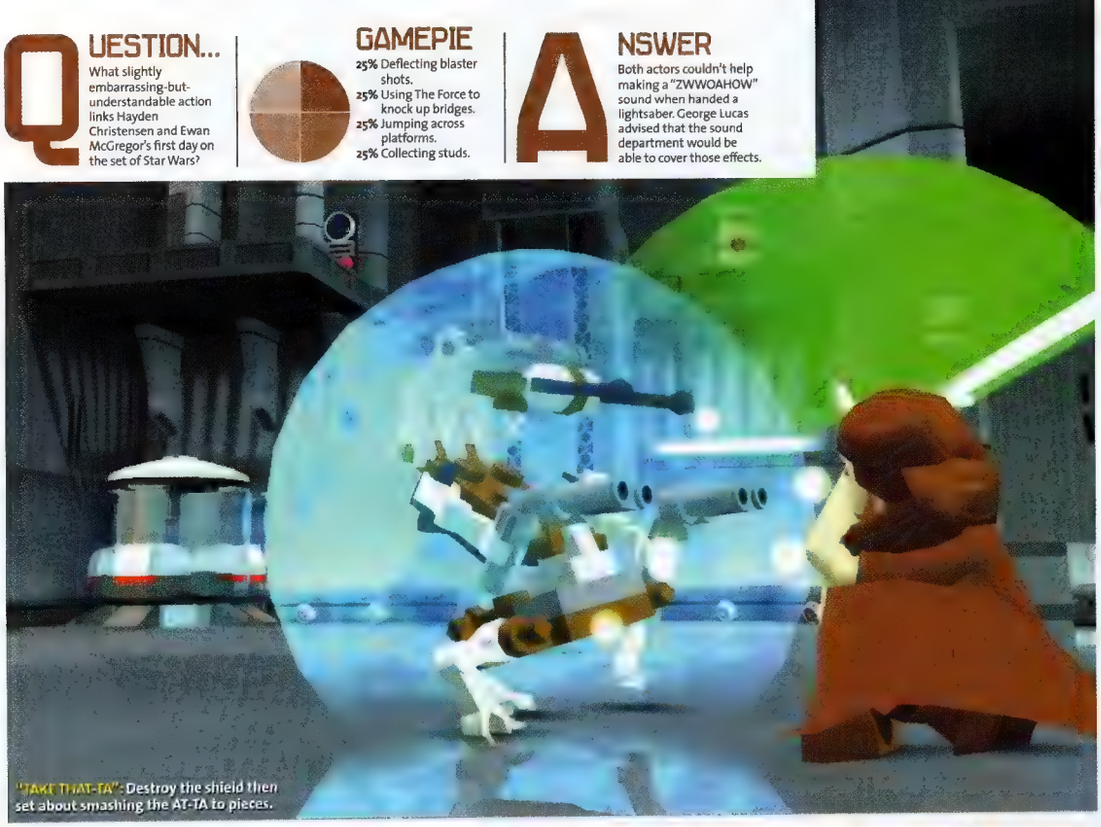
We know what we want from our action games – an ever-changing, fun-filled romp that has us coming back for more. And regular readers will know that we've been wittering excitedly about *Lego Star Wars* for the last few months, firmly believing that it'll provide all this and more. And apart from the crucial 'ever-changing' factor (we'll get to that later), *Lego Star Wars* does just that by the toybox-load. From the moment the stirring orchestral score strikes up *that* title track, you'll be goose-pimpled with excitement. And when you first hit ⊡ to unleash your little Lego lightsaber, you can't help but raise a smile. You *know* this is going to be fun.

With the emphasis firmly on offering a different take on the whole Star Wars phenomenon, *Lego Star Wars* is out to attract a broader audience than just those of us that were around for when the films were ~~good~~ better.

QUESTION...
What slightly embarrassing-but-understandable action links Hayden Christensen and Ewan McGregor's first day on the set of Star Wars?

GAMEPIE
25% Deflecting blaster shots.
25% Using The Force to knock up bridges.
25% Jumping across platforms.
25% Collecting studs.

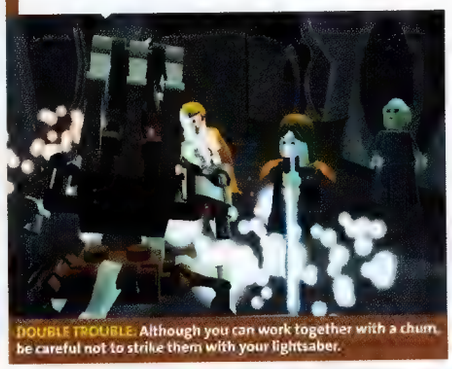
ANSWER
Both actors couldn't help making a "ZWWOAHOW" sound when handed a lightsaber. George Lucas advised that the sound department would be able to cover those effects.



"TAKE THAT-TA": Destroy the shield then set about smashing the AT-TA to pieces.

IT TAKES TWO TO JANGO

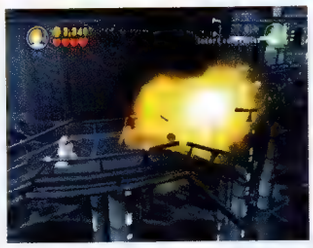
Ever since the demise of local arcades across the country, a decent piece of multiplayer camaraderie has been lacking. *Double Dragon*, *Final Fight* and even *Gauntlet* offered hours of button-bashing joy. But praise be for *Lego Star Wars* – one of the most entertaining two-player action games on PS2. OK, so a lot of the appeal stems from twatting your unsuspecting chum with a lightsaber, but there's more. Like being able to go to Free Play, selecting any of your unlocked characters and entering any of the episodes, for one. Glorious.



DOUBLE TROUBLE: Although you can work together with a chum, be careful not to strike them with your lightsaber.

THEY THINK IT'S MAUL OVER: Going toe-to-toe with Darth Maul is quality.

ALL DROID UP: The cut-scenes show the little men kicking defunct robots.



EXTRAS! EXTRAS! EXTRAS!

The next episode

■ If you manage to complete each of the three episodes with the Jedi gauge filled, you'll be able to access the top-secret extra level. We don't want to give away the surprise, but expect to see some old friends along the way.

"GRIN SIDE-BY-SIDE AS YOU UNFURL YOUR LIGHTSABER AND SMASH AN ENEMY TO PIECES"

Thanks to the ultra-accessible nature of the game, kids and grown men alike can grin side-by-side as Obi Wan Kenobi uses The Force (◎ with any Jedi) to explode through a Lego brick door, or smirk as they hit ◎ to unfurl their lightsaber and smash an enemy into the plastic pieces from which an unseen Lego master carefully once carefully assembled them.

The plot of the game is straightforward. You play through each of the first three movies (that's Phantom Menace, Clones and Sith), each time working your way to the climactic big battle – like going sabre-to-sabre with Count Dooku at the end of Attack Of The Clones. Obviously, *Lego Star Wars* couldn't just recreate the actual film surroundings exactly. Instead, in typical platforming style, you'll be bounding over precarious ledges in Theed Palace and flicking switches to open doors on the rainswept world of Kamino.

Progression is rewarded with extra characters (56 in all), and these weird and wonderful people can all be used within the Free Play mode (play any stage, with any character and use any shoulder button to switch on the fly). Each character comes with a relative air of individuality – Jedis can use The Force to topple walls and construct bridges, droids can shoot enemies with their blasters at great distances and long-eared cretins like Jar Jar Binks can jump to reach high platforms. But really, each of these base characters are fundamentally the same as the last. The only exception is Yoda, who, when his weapon's drawn, bounces around the screen like an amphetamine-fuelled gymnast.

There's variety between stages, like taking part in pod-races and commanding your own laser-firing spaceship. It adds a small diversion from the platforming action, which, in truth, does become repetitive. And you can re-enter these stages with renewed gusto if you get a mate to join the action (see IT TAKES TWO TO JANGO). And levels such as the huge Jedi battle (featuring Mace Windu) in the arena on Geonosis, are particularly frantic as loads of droids and AT-TA's fill the screen.

We love *Lego Star Wars*, but we're not comfortable with the repetitiveness of the action. It's also super easy – even for ham-fisted Padwans. And where are the good episodes, you know Four, Five and Six? But we can't have everything. *Lego Star Wars* is great fun, and has rekindled our love for cutesy platform games. Just... um... keep it quiet will you? Cheers. **Nathan Irvine**

■ Lego Star Wars *is in stores now*

PSM² VERDICT

GAMEPLAY	GRAPHICS	SOUND
+ Extremely accessible Jedi fun. – Too easy, too short and a bit repetitive.	+ Bright and bold presentation. – Camera doesn't always offer the best view.	+ Genuine swooshes and clashes of the lightsaber. – No voice acting anywhere. At all. Ever.

LIFESPAN

Each of the 17 levels are easy, but with over 50 characters to unlock and a sterling two-player romp, you'll be hooked for weeks.

MINUTES ——— YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
STAR WARS BATTLEFRONT
IT'S WORSE THAN...
BEING A JEDI

A very enjoyable Star Wars experience that offers oodles of fun. If it wasn't for the repetition and the fact that it's way to easy, this could've been a classic.

78

PlayStation.2

FREE TO PARTY

3+

www.pegi.info

www.playstationfreedom.co.uk

www.singstargame.com

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INFOSTRIP

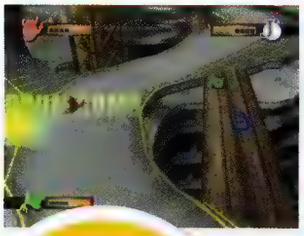
DETAILS
Developer: Supersonic
Publisher: Xplosiv
Players: 1-4
Memory Save: 41kb
Widescreen: Yes
50-60Hz: No
Surround Sound: yes

PUBTALK
The smart arse thing to say down the boozer.
"The town of Clark, South Dakota, holds an annual mashed potato wrestling contest. The next is on August 6th. Get over there."

GAMEPIE
33% Jeering at your mates.
33% Being jeered at by your mates.
33% Falling off cliffs.
01% Single-player mode.

GAMEFAX
Driving
Addictive
Old-Skool
Multi-tap

TRIVBURST
- 30 tracks and 15 different vehicles on offer.
- Nine types of weapon, including machine guns, shotguns and oil slicks.
- Play against three mates in multi-player.



SNOW JOKE: The ice and snow makes [illegible] treacherous.

ICE SQUAD: This track is little more than one huge ice rink. This needs care.

LOAD OF TRACK: One of the simpler courses in the *Mashed* world.

WATCH IT ON THE DVD VIDEO

PLANKS FOR THE MEMORIES. The green car hurtles over the side as red cackles evilly.

PSM2 BRONZE AWARD

The MON£Y $HOT
Fully Loaded is full of little shortcuts like this narrow plank over a gap. As this pic shows, there's rarely enough room for two – time to fight.

BOOM, SHAKE THE, ER, TRACK

Mashed **attempts to add some longevity to its single-player mode with some new race types, like Beat The Bomb. Here, there's a bomb about to go off, and it's your job to, well, beat it by completing two laps before it explodes. Some might say this is just disguising a bog-standard timed race with a dodgy explosive conceit, but not us. Oh, no. We think it's revolutionary. Yes.**

BAN THE BOMB: Two laps, eh? It's a bit like Speed. Or not.

CHECK IT OUT: Made it to the checkpoint. Can we do it?

DON'T TELL BOMB, THE BABYSITTER'S DEAD: Bad pun, sorry. Anyway, we've failed dismally. But it's hard to care either way.

"MASHED OFF YER NUT"

MASHED: FULLY LOADED

We've heard of refried beans – but refried mash?

There are some things that aren't much fun without friends. Going to the cinema, for instance, or a gig. And you can hardly play football without your mates, can you? Nightclubs are hardly the sort of place you'd frequent on your own, and Andy could hardly have his 'special' wrestling parties on his lonesome could he?

Which brings us to *Mashed: Fully Loaded*, the 'not quite a sequel, more an update' to last year's reasonably-received overhead-viewed racer (79%, PSM2#51), which if played solo, is as empty as Jade Goody's head. Drive. Win. Drive. Lose. Try again. Win. End of. Stick it multi-player, though, and it becomes a frenzied swearathon of car-battering, loser-baiting and victorious gloating.

But let's recap. The first *Mashed* was a fun little top-down racer along the lines of *Micro Machines*, a game which may have appeared on more formats than any other title in living memory. Like *Micro Machines*, the goal of *Mashed* and its successor is to get far enough ahead of the other racers to actually vanish from the top of the screen. For this, you get a point closer to victory. The main problems then were that single-player mode was utterly dull – defeating the computer cars seemed more about luck than actual skill and it all felt hugely bland. Then there was the fact that the closer you got to the top of the screen, the less you could see in front of you, making it hugely likely that you'd plummet off a cliff and end up being docked points through no fault of your own.

And has any of that changed? Nope. So what's new? Well, to be brutally frank, not a great deal. There's some extra tracks, like the Egyptian deserts, some new weapons (like the flamethrower) to go alongside the machine guns and rocket launchers and a load of new cars, each of which handle slightly differently to the others, but not enough to make a significant difference to how you're actually playing. It's another twenty quid for almost exactly the same game you played before.

But, with a few mates, *Mashed* remains a terrific proposition, a bundle of shouty, sweary fun. There are few things more satisfying than being at the back of the pack, launching a well-placed rocket to blow away the leader, then weaving your way through the traffic to steal first place and that final point to win the tournament. If you've a gang of eager buddies, this is terrific. If not, or if you bought this last time round, *Fully Loaded* has less point than a broken pencil. **David Cook**

■ *Get* Fully Loaded *now.*

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY	GRAPHICS	SOUND
+ Brilliant laughs in multi-player mode. – Without any merit on your ownsome.	+ The tracks look lovely. Good weather effects. – The cars are cans of corned beef on wheels.	+ Nothing to report. Sorry. – Those redneck voice samples remain as infuriating as ever.

LIFESPAN
If you're playing this solo, you'll give up as soon as you begin. In multi-player, this'll be prime post-pub entertainment for ages.
MINUTES — YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
MICRO MACHINES

IT'S WORSE THAN...
BURNOUT 3

It's great fun with your mates, but on your own, *Mashed* sucks the big one. And too similar to the original, so if you own that, don't even consider getting this.

70

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: Capcom
Publisher: Capcom
Players: 1-4
Memory Save: 396kb
Widescreen: No
50-60Hz: Yes
Surround Sound: No

PUBTALK
The smart arse thing to say down the boozer.
"12,000 years ago, to kill animals for food, humans used to pepper them with arrows. The dawn of Sainsbury's ended that."

GAMEPIE
40% Running away.
20% Killing defenceless animals.
20% Getting nowhere.
20% Staring at the visuals in disbelief.

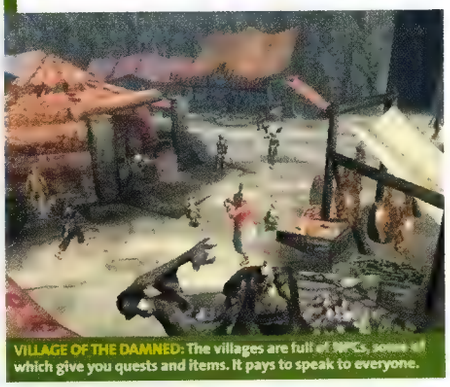
GAMEFAX
RPG
Network Play
Hard
PS2 Exclusive

TRIVBURST
- Play online with up to three other players.
- Pass the time by fishing, cooking and creating your own armour.
- Chat with other players with a USB keyboard.

PLAYER 1
PLAYER 2
PLAYER 3
The MON£¥ $HOT
This is as big as it gets. Play hard enough and you'll be able to fight one of these huge dragons. They're best tackled with some mates online.
PSM2 BRONZE AWARD

VILLAGE PEOPLE

Your village serves as the game's hub. Here, you can buy weapons and armour, upgrade them and sleep/save at your house. Its most important feature, however, lets you chat to the village chief and take on missions. You start out with basic collection tasks (you can only go as far as your level dictates) and he'll teach you the basics – everything from fishing to cooking meat, creating weapons and combining items. What a very nice man.


VILLAGE OF THE DAMNED: The villages are full of NPCs, some of which give you quests and items. It pays to speak to everyone.

"HUNT 'EM DOWN AND MAKE THE MONSTERS BAWL"

MONSTER HUNTER

Countless good ideas wasted on an overly basic online RPG. Shame, that.

Playing *Monster Hunter* is like watching the latter half of the Matrix trilogy. With every glimpse of fleeting brilliance comes an almighty sigh of despair as you realize how good it *could've* been. Just as The Matrix Reloaded devoted a whole half hour to an unwatchably 'erotic rave' then three hours of CG robots fighting so *Monster Hunter* wastes its unique hunting/gathering gameplay and indescribably good graphics on a flawed and uneventful online role playing game.

The game adopts a traditional hierarchical mission structure – your character starts out weak, defenceless and with a weapon that might as well be an inflatable hammer, and you have to complete various low-level tasks to increase your stats in order to attempt better, harder missions. It's essentially busywork and (like *Everquest* and *Final Fantasy XI* before it) you have to perform tedious task after tedious task before you even get a sniff of the good stuff.

But, as with most RPGs, dedication breeds satisfaction and you'll reel in disbelief at some of the monsters that appear later in the game. You start off slaying harmless herbivores and wild pigs, but, as you explore more of the world map, you'll find yourself battling against screen-dwarfing dragons and herds of horned carnivores. It's a shame fighting them isn't more accomplished. Moves are pulled off via the right analogue stick and it doesn't work very well. Strikes don't flow together and your character stumbles between attacks like a dimwit, making scrapping with a nimble velociraptor difficult.

An interesting feature lets you harvest the bones and teeth of monsters to decorate your armour and weapons. Take down a Wyvern for example and you can pry off its jawbone and make yourself a hat, should you so desire. Oh, and those graphics? They're spectacular. You're nudged down set paths, but the surrounding visuals are breathtaking. You can see for miles – grand vistas stretching far into the distance – and everything looks dense and realistic.

Online play is identical to single-player, only you have three other people helping you. This is more fun than the lonely single-player mode and makes some missions much easier, but we were expecting huge areas populated by other gamers, like *Final Fantasy XI*. It's a shame, but, for serious RPGers, *Monster Hunter* isn't worth bothering with. There's a lot to do and some brilliant ideas, but it simply isn't a solid enough package. There's potential, but it'd work much better as a fully-functioning single-player experience. You hear, Capcom? **Andy Kelly**

■ Make dinos extinct from May 27th.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY	GRAPHICS	SOUND
+ Frantic and often quite entertaining battles. – A very basic RPG with no real standout features.	+ Amazing draw distance and monster design. – Character models are basic at best.	+ Good ambient effects and monster sounds. – Very quiet. More music would've been nice.

LIFESPAN
If you like it, the online play should keep you hunting for weeks, but if you don't you'll get bored very easily.
WAIT2 YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
EVERQUEST

IT'S WORSE THAN...
FINAL FANTASY XI

Very, very decent, but the good ideas aren't fleshed out enough, the combat is basic and the missions are often a bit dull. Import *Final Fantasy XI* instead.

70

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: Swordfish
Publisher: Vivendi
Players: 1-4
Memory Save: 2604kb
Widescreen: No
50-60Hz: No
Surround Sound: No

PREVIOUSLY IN PSM2...
"THE WAY YOU INTERACT WITH THE GAME WORLD'S GOT PEOPLE BUZZING"
PSM2#58

GAMEFAX
FPS | Action | PS2 Exclusive | Easy

TRIVBURST
- Thirteen single-player levels across eight environments, including Hong Kong, India, North Korea and China.
- Almost every object can be manipulated.

"NOW IS THE WINTER OF OUR (MILD) DISCONTENT"

The MON£¥ $HOT
See how this picture's at a funny angle? That's because you're actually dying here. Make the most of this, 'cos you don't see it very often at all.

CHICKEN HARMING

There are all sorts of fun little things to find in the world of *Cold Winter* if you have a scout around, from the shiny red scooters stashed at the back of an abandoned shop (which you can't have a go on, sadly) to council notices pinned up around the streets. Then there's these poor chickens, cruelly locked up in cramped little boxes...

COLD WINTER

It's the new *GoldenEye*! No, honestly, it is this time. The new flippin' *GoldenEye*! OK, it's not, really. Sorry about that.

"ALTHOUGH THE FIRST COUPLE OF LEVELS ARE A LET-DOWN, THERE'S A LOT TO LOVE ABOUT COLD WINTER"

'The new *GoldenEye*' tag is something that gets bandied about too often in videogames, and it's one that's already been stuck onto *Cold Winter*, thanks, mainly, to the fact that one of the programmers of this worked on that particular N64 classic. It's a huge burden to carry, one that the supposed 'sequel', EA's *Rogue Agent*, failed to withstand and it's one that *Cold Winter* desperately tries to live up to, but can't quite manage it.

In fact, the first couple of stages of *Cold Winter* are so far from *GoldenEye*'s taut precision, it's hard to understand where the comparisons could come from. Boring weapons, unimaginative level design and, mystifyingly, an infinite medipack (even on the hardest setting) strip what should be a fraught, desperate escape from a Chinese prison (the game's all to do with the Cold War and international espionage, by the way) into a simple case of rushing the guards head-on and, should you approach death, nipping round a corner to use your medipack. It's an absolute, gutting let-down. This is followed by a mystifyingly pointless jaunt round some empty Cairo alleys, attaching surveillance cameras to the walls. Jeez. And then, suddenly, you walk into a massive shootout in a hotel and duck, dive and blast away with a huge grenade launcher – and everything feels good.

Yes, despite the inauspicious beginning, there's a lot to love about *Cold Winter*. There's the way almost any object in the gaming environment can be pulled about and manipulated to create impromptu cover from gunfire. Tables can be overturned, piles of barrels can be used to hide behind, and you can even crouch beside a dumpster and push it along to protect yourself from sniper fire. It all adds a (admittedly fairly simple) tactical side to the wanton bloodshed. But the object manipulation offers more than just a way to shield yourself from gunfire – there's scope for all kinds of entertaining diversions. Stack some explosive barrels on top of each other and see how big a bang you can create. Blast away the supports on some nearby canopies and watch the enemies perched upon them plummet to the ground. Kick a melon around the pavement and have a game of

QUESTION...
What year was the coldest British winter on record?

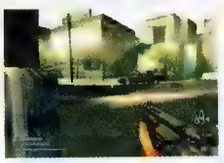
GAMEPIE
55% Trying to resist the temptation to use the medipack.
20% Using the medipack.
20% Cursing your own weak-willedness.
05% Melon football.

ANSWER
It was 1962. During this time, it blizzarded for 67 consecutive days in the South-West of England and the sea off the coast of Eastbourne froze over.

DON'T LOSE YOUR HEAD: Oh, too late. Some of the weaponry in *Cold Winter* is brutal.

"IT'S FUN, BUT JUST TOO EASY – IT'S GOLDENEYE WITH STABILISERS"

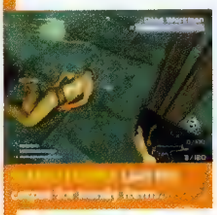
TAKE A LOOK: ...up when strolling



THE BIG BANG: See those blokes flying through the air? You did that.

COMBINE HARVESTER

The 'combine mechanic' is a nice touch, allowing a side salad of tactical depth with your main course of carnage. The only difficult thing, though, is finding time to search dead guards while under constant gunfire. Still, it's a fun distraction and adds some much-needed variety.



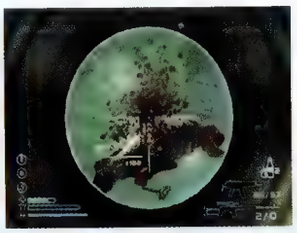
football. Hell, it's more fun than *FIFA Street*. It's all a big playpen. But without the babies.

Another twist that *Cold Winter* offers is the snappily-titled 'combine item mechanic', which lets you take anything that you find lying around and create brand new items out of them. Find some cloth, a bottle and some petrol to make a Molotov cocktail. Find a tank of petrol and, er, an alarm clock to make a timed explosive. Then there's lockpicks, more explosives and a few others as you progress. Some of these are reliant on the same component parts, however, meaning you have to decide whether you're best off using, say, a Molotov in your current situation or having a quick scout round to see if you can find the elements needed for a mine. How do you find these things? Why, by looting the corpses of the dead. Obviously.

And the physics are nothing short of fantastic. Men crumple convincingly as you shoot them. Blast them in the leg, and it'll give way from under them. If they're at the top of the stairs, they'll tumble down in exactly the right way. Shoot them in the arm and it's likely to drop to the floor. Head shots create a fountain of blood. Blow up a load of explosives near them and laugh mercilessly as they go flying through the air, arms waving pathetically, and crash, lifeless, to the floor.

And yet – big set-pieces apart – it's never all that exciting. The infinite medipack robs the game of its sense of urgency – yes, you'll definitely die if you're caught in concerted gunfire or if you're simply just blown up, but even then, you'll restart near-enough exactly where you left off anyway. And OK, you don't *have* to use it, but you try resisting the sweetness of immortality when you're about to die near the end of an epic gun battle. Other problems? The multi-player mode is too slow for words to even describe and it's completely pointless playing it. Then there's that *Cold Winter* makes a big deal about its variety of locations – India, Hong Kong, China, etc – but then plonks you in utterly familiar environments – a warehouse in China doesn't look any different to a warehouse in Chichester, after all. But the major problem is, like *Project Snowblind*, that it's just too easy. It's a lot like *GoldenEye*, certainly, but the joy of that was beating its unforgiving nature. This is *GoldenEye* with stabilisers, *GoldenEye: Early Learning Centre Edition*. Colossal fun, in many ways, but almost without challenge. Damn. **David Cook**

■ Cold Winter *is out now.*



PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ Smooth, fast and often a sheer joy.
– But waaaaay too easy most of the time.

GRAPHICS
+ Brilliant explosions and beautiful locations.
– Lots of dull-looking underground bits.

SOUND
+ Satisfying booms, bangs and gunfire.
– The usual dodgy voice-acting. As ever, then.

LIFESPAN
Although online and multiplayer modes will keep you going for a bit, the main game's easier than ABC.
MINUTES — YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
GOLDENEYE: ROGUE AGENT

IT'S WORSE THAN...
TIMESPLITTERS 3

Cold Winter ticks every box on the 'perfect FPS' checksheet – except for the one marked 'lasting challenge'. Good, but it should have been so much better.

80

18

Actual in game interrogation

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WHAT DOES IT FEEL LIKE TO DRILL THE HEAD OF THE PUNK WHO STOLE YOUR FAMILY FROM YOU?

BECOME THE PUNISHER

MARCH 24TH

PlayStation.2 XBOX PC CD ROM MARVEL THQ

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INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: Capcom
Publisher: Capcom
Players: 1
Memory Save: 366kb
Widescreen: No
50-60Hz: Yes
Surround Sound: No

PREVIOUSLY IN PSM2...
"THINK YOUR WAY AROUND RATHER THAN SHOOTING UP THE PLACE"
PSM2#58

GAMEFAX
Violent
Hard
Survival Horror
Original

TRIVBURST
- Outsmart enemies by hiding and leaving traps.
- Command your dog to attack, retrieve objects and find secret areas.
- Solve taxing *Resi*-style puzzles and riddles.

BREASTS OF BEHAVIOUR: Fiona's 'bits' wobble unneccesarily when she runs.

"YOU CAN RUN, BUT YOU CAN'T HIDE. OH, SORRY. YOU CAN, ACTUALLY"

A WALK IN THE DARK: If you [illegible] Debilitas' shadow, run like Forrest [illegible]

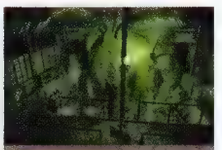
The MON£¥ $HOT
When Debilitas catches Fiona, the screen fades to black and you can hear him groaning as he... well, we're not sure *what* he does to her exactly...

FEAR EFFECTS

There are no health bars in *Haunting Ground* – Fiona's survival depends on both her stamina and her sanity. If she sees something scary, the screen starts to distort, the music gets louder, she gets exhausted, she stumbles and you have to hide her away somewhere so she can get her breath back and calm down. You can also use items like sprigs of lavender and camomile to ease the stress, but this is only a short-term solution. Hiding is the key.

SCARED OF THE DOG: Even with Hewie backing you up, shaking off the fear effect is tough. Hide somewhere or use recovery items.

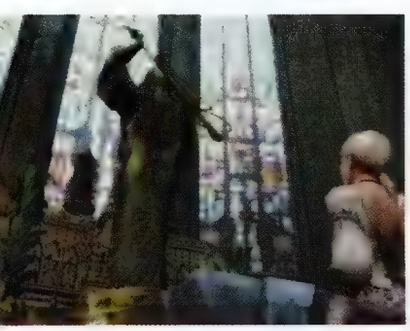
MUSIC TO MY FEARS: The mad music is totally unnerving.



SCREEN WARPS: The screen goes all weird and wobbly.

HAUNTING GROUND

No shotguns or zombies – just a girl, her dog and a giant baby from Hell.



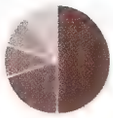
Fever dreams. *Haunting Ground* plays out like a prolonged, upsetting fever dream. (Indeed, it might – or might not – all be a dream on the part of protagonist Fiona). The kind of nightmare that has you leaping out of bed, sweating profusely and burying yourself under the sheets for fear of being quartered by a giant fox with chainsaws for arms. Even worse, after spending the best part of eight hours tossing, turning and convulsing – chainsaw foxes lurching at you from every angle, cold sweat streaming from every pore – you get *nowhere*. You wake up twice as tired, twice as ill and twice as angry at your immune system for simply not doing its job properly.

Six hours into *Haunting Ground* and we've achieved virtually *nothing*. We've debunked countless puzzles and fought off the enemy more times than we care to mention and we're *still* traipsing through the castle that serves as the game's opening level. It's immensely frustrating and patently unsatisfying. We found ourselves dipping in and out every hour or so with nothing driving us on or drawing us in. Put simply, it's broken. The pace, the scripting, the character development (or lack thereof) and the level design all feel scrappy, confused and unfinished.

But those are the negatives and *Haunting Ground* has its fair share of positives, so let's slap on our happy hats for a bit and explain why it might be worth buying. Firstly, its got Debilitas in it. Few games can claim to have made us experience genuine panic but this guy had us writhing and sinking into our chairs. Why? Because he's the most macabre, foreboding and downright sinister videogame character we've

TOP 5 GROUNDS

- Ground Force
- Neutral Ground
- Ground Control
- Ground Pepper
- Huckleberry Ground



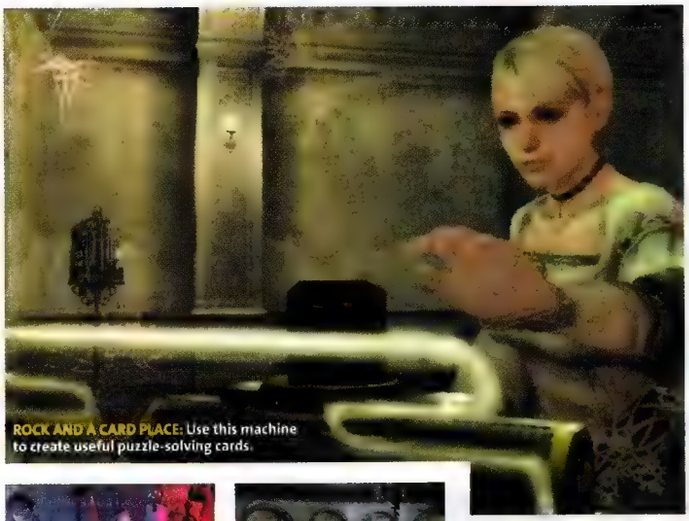
GAMEPIE

50% Falling on your arse.
20% Hiding in cupboards.
10% Scolding Hewie.
10% Bouncing breasts.
10% Wishing you had a shotgun.

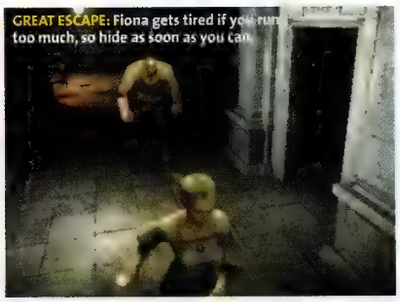
PUBTALK

The smart arse thing to say down the boozer.
"Cutscene director Naoto Takenaka has been popular in Japan since the '80s. He also appeared in the sequel to anime epic, Ghost in the Shell."

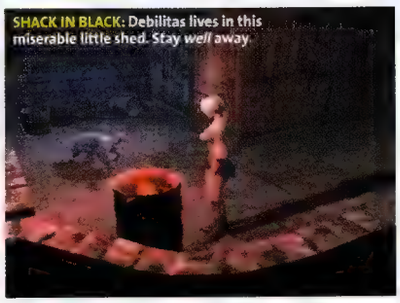
DOG AND BONE: Hewie can't kill Debilitas, but he *can* make him bleed and run off.



ROCK AND A CARD PLACE: Use this machine to create useful puzzle-solving cards.



GREAT ESCAPE: Fiona gets tired if you run too much, so hide as soon as you can.



SHACK IN BLACK: Debilitas lives in this miserable little shed. Stay *well* away.

"A SWEATING, MIS-SHAPEN MENTALIST WITH ARMS LIKE TREE TRUNKS"

dealt with since *Silent Hill 2*'s hideous Pyramid Head first glared at us in *that* apartment block scene. He's horrible – a sweating, misshapen mentalist with arms like tree trunks and wild, bulbous eyes that scream "I'm going to pull off your head and eat your face!" – and he's totally relentless in his quest to end your life. You can't fight him directly so you end up playing a twisted game of hide and seek, crouching under furniture and hiding in cupboards until he gets bored and gives up.

This is easier said than done, however – if you hide in the same place too many times he'll get wise and flush you out. Worse yet, further into the game other enemies pursue Fiona, meaning other tactics must be deployed. For example, one enemy goes mental if she catches a glimpse of herself in a mirror. Yes, you guessed it, there are mirrors placed around the level so you can lure her into its path and make your escape. This idea was already explored in the distinctly average *Clock Tower* (in many ways this games prequel) but *Haunting Ground* does it much better and there's a real sense of urgency when the piercing music that signifies the entrance of an enemy starts up.

Then there's Hewie, a dog and your best and only chance of escaping the castle alive. Using the right analogue stick you can command him to attack enemies, sniff around for hidden entrances and retrieve hard-to-reach items. You can also keep the mutt in check by scolding or praising him as you see fit; if he's being disobedient, tell him off, but if he does something good, give him some beef jerky and pet him. It works remarkably well and makes the game somewhat original despite being steeped in survival horror cliché. You name it, it's done to death – convoluted riddle-based puzzles, combining items, cheap shock tactics, eerie ambient sound effects, scattered documents and memos all over the shop – still, what do you expect from a Capcom horror title?

Damn. We've stumbled back into the negative zone. Sorry, but *Haunting Ground* upsets more than it entertains. For instance, instead of a shotgun, a knife or even a bit of old plank, Fiona basically *upsets* the enemy by throwing aromatherapy crystals and bits of magnesium at them. It's curiously half-arsed and along with the confusing and unworkable item synthesis menu (combine items to create other items through an inane shape-based puzzle thing) you're left flummoxed, irritated and ultimately reaching for the 'off' button. We don't want this – we want to disguise ourselves as a tree, fend off mad zombie villagers with a shotgun, jump on a hydra's head and stab it in the eyeball, scream around the Nurburgring in a Pagani Zonda and stick someone's head in an oven.

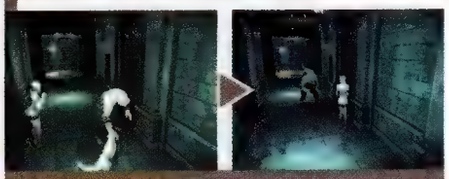
We got bored of hide and seek when we were seven years old and – regardless of the bells and whistles – that's essentially what this is, but in a disturbing videogame. There's certainly fun to be had here, but really, if you want to play playground games, go and hang around a primary school. Actually, no, hang on a minute... **Andy Kelly**

■ *Hide under your digital bed right now.*

DEBILITAS SAYS

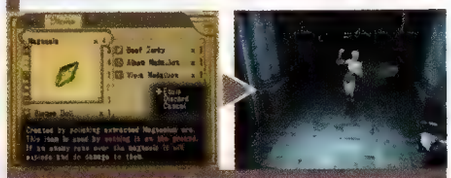
"Hullo. Durrr, I'm Debilitas and I'm going to show you how this 'ere game works. And that. I'm not that smart, what with me being a baby trapped in the body of hideously deformed man and all, but... durrr, I'll try me best. Buuurgh... go on gizza kiss!"

HIDE AND SHRIEK: "Curse that Fiona. When I'm chasing 'er she tucks 'erself away under a bed or in a cupboard and I end up losin' track of her altogevver. She ain't so smart though – if she 'ides in the same place too many times I'll get wise and find 'er."



(WO)MAN'S BEST FRIEND: "Fiona rescued this stupid dog. She calls him Hewie an' 'e does pretty much whatever she says, which usually involves 'im bitin' my ass. I don't like bein' bitten and I'll kick the little bugger's face off if 'e gets too rough. Or eat 'im!"

ALCHEMISTS ANONYMOUS: "Fiona can make stuff out of... er, stuff. I saw 'er doin' it. She collects lots of stoopid old crap and combines it in one of the castle labs to restore 'er stamina an' that. I wish she'd stop it. It makes 'er 'arder to catch." <sniff>



ASSAULT ON THE SENSES: "Even without that dumb dog Hewie, Fiona can still 'urt me. She throws magnesium at my 'ead which explodes and makes me all sore in my brain and on my face. She can kick me in the shins too. Muuurgh, she's 'orrible. Mummy!"

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY	GRAPHICS	SOUND
+ Intuitive and genuinely unnerving. – Convoluted puzzles and dull exploration.	+ Remarkable character design and animation. – Bleak locations – it's a festivalé of grey.	+ Outstanding ambient music and sound effects. – Typically weak voice-acting. As ever.

LIFESPAN

Because of the unyielding difficulty, reaching the end of the game could take upwards of 15 hours. But there's no real replay value.

MINUTES — YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
CLOCK TOWER 3

IT'S WORSE THAN...
SILENT HILL 2

Mysteriously addictive and genuinely unnerving, *Haunting Ground* takes survival horror in an interesting direction but ends up underperforming rather.

78

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: Eutechnyx
Publisher: Codemasters
Players: 1-2
Memory Save: 103kb
Widescreen: No
50-60Hz: No
Surround Sound: No

PUBTALK
The smart arse thing to say down the boozer.
"There's a second script for street-racing flick 2 Fast 2 Furious, which features Vin Diesel. But then he decided not to star."

GAMEPIE
10% Racing
10% Modding
65% Phwooooaaaarrrr!
15% Self-loathing.

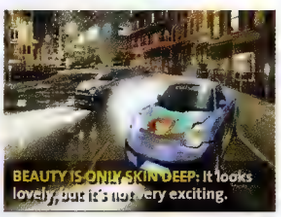
GAMEFAX
Driving
Network Play
Easy
Saucy

TRIVBURST
- Earn respect points and money to mod your car.
- 17 different women taking their clothes off.
- Online mode where you can gamble your car against your opponent's.

The MON£Y $HOT
Look at that paint-job. There's a lot of modding options in *Street Racing Syndicate*. Though nowhere near as many as yer *Midnight Club*...

SHINE TIME: Look how shiny the roads are. Maybe they've been polished.

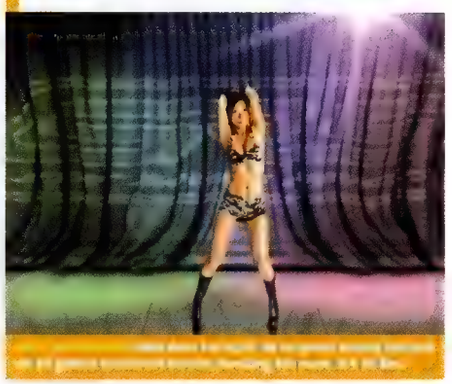
"THE GAME THAT **MAKES REAL WOMEN REDUNDANT**"



BEAUTY IS ONLY SKIN DEEP: It looks lovely, but it's not very exciting.

MATA HAREM

So, the women, then. Pass their 'respect challenges' and they'll be your girlfriends – and real representations of the characters get their kit off. They seem like jolly nice ladies, too, albeit probably not the kind you might take home to meet your mum. Each girl has three videos to unlock, and there's 17 girls in total. Our favourite is Aiko, here. Apparently, she likes 'cooking, violent movies and gardening'. Though probably not simultaneously.



STREET RACING SYNDICATE

This certainly brings a whole new meaning to the term 'racing strip'.

In many ways, *Street Racing Syndicate* is the most embarrassing title on PS2. It's like a lowbrow *Midnight Club* dunked in the juices of *BMX XXX* and coated in the same tragic chav varnish as *FIFA Street*. It's the most cringeworthy example of porn-cum-gaming we've seen yet – the game's 'ladies' will not only willingly join your 'harem', you'll also get to see a video of a (real) woman – with a vague likeness to the character – dancing around in her underpants for your dubious pleasure and, more often than not, looking vaguely uncomfortable in the process. It makes you want to curl up on the floor in shame.

But that's not to say it's a bad game, because it isn't. You have to go at it with a chisel to hack away the layers of tackiness, but once you're there, you'll find *SRS* to actually be quite a competent – if hardly mindblowing – racing sim. It's a blatant aping of the *NFSU*/*Midnight Club* formula – win races, earn money and upgrade your vehicle with all sorts of stuff: new tyres, outrageous paint jobs, nitro boosts, spoilers – the usual suspects. But the proof of the pudding is in the racing and *SRS*'s racing is, well, OK. It's all about earning respect and money from the various 'crews' by winning races. And, once you've upgraded your car sufficiently for it to actually have any sensation of speed, you'll find yourself involved in races that are, overall, pretty decent. The cars handle nicely and it all looks lovely and shiny. But at no point does it ever get the adrenaline pumping. Once you've got a good enough car, you'd hard-pushed not to win, and although it's quite quick, it really isn't speedy enough, no matter how much you floor the nitro.

Yet it's all mildly compulsive. This is, we admit, partly to do with watching women take their clothes off – call us shallow if you will – but also because there's a lot of variety in SRS, from normal three-lap races, timed pelts around the city clocking off checkpoints, straight one-lap sprints, loads of locations – streets, beaches, storm drains and more – and some stunt challenges. But while there's lots of variety, it's too easy – and over far too soon.

Stick it in competition with *Midnight Club 3* or *NFSU2*, and *SRS* pales. It's not as fast, it's too short and it simply isn't frenetic or exciting enough. It's fun, and sure, it's a bit like having your own personal squad of lapdancers performing on demand, but as a game, *SRS* is little more than a pleasant, but ultimately unfulfilling, Sunday afternoon drive. **David Cook**

Win the affection of ladies in May.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ A solid enough arcade-style racer.
– But never exciting. Lacking in oomph.

GRAPHICS
+ A great rendition of a (very shiny) city.
– But a lot of the tracks look and feel identical.

SOUND
+ Well, there's no great problems here...
– ...but there's nothing to get excited about either.

LIFESPAN
It's not that big and it's not that difficult, so it won't be that long before you put *SRS* to one side for more substantial thrills.
MINUTES — YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
BMX XXX

IT'S WORSE THAN...
MIDNIGHT CLUB 3

It's fun, but only in the short-term. Really, your interest will only last as long as your interest in the ladies, who, while fetching, aren't going to keep you glued forever.

62

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS

Developer: Xplosiv
Publisher: Xplosiv
Players: 1
Memory Save: 321KB
Widescreen: No
50-60Hz: Yes
Surround Sound: No

GAMEFAX

2D shooter | Hard | Shit | Budget

MISTER ROBOTO: The bosses are large and, as you'd expect, a complete pain in the arse.

SECOND COMING: *Gunbird 2* looks distinctly better, but it's still pixelated retro guff.

"FACE IT, NEW GAMES ARE BETTER!"

GUNBIRD: SPECIAL EDITION

Retro-pap for a tenner is still retro-pap.

The year is 1994. Kurt Cobain blows his head off with a shotgun, the first episode of Friends airs in America, OJ Simpson flees from police on live television and *Gunbird* makes its arcade debut. Yes, *Gunbird*. The game we're now reviewing *eleven years later*. Why are we reviewing a game from more than a decade ago? Because some clever publisher has decided to release it, along with *Gunbird 2*, as a 'special edition' and at a budget price. Brilliant!

Or not, depending on your tastes. If you're mad on top-down 2D shooters then *Gunbird* is just that – a top-down 2D shooter. What else can we say? You know the drill; weave in and out of enemy bullets, shoot things until they explode, collect powerups – it's a tried-and-tested formula and neither game deviates from it. Which is fine, if you like that kind of thing.

But consider this. For the tenner you spend on *Gunbird* you could scour the pre-owned bucket and pick up *Gradius V*, *R-Type Final*, *Metal Slug 3* and countless other games that are both bigger and better. Still, if you're a fan of retro games you could do a lot worse. *Gunbird 2* is decent enough and should appeal to masochists who get a kick out of harder-than-dried-in-Frosties shoot-'em-ups. If you dig pixels, hardness and simplicity, get this in – otherwise, find yourself a pre-owned copy of *Onimusha 2* for the same price and play a proper game instead. **Andy Kelly**

■ *It's Gun for a Bird-en <cough> right now.*

PSM² VERDICT

Fun for those who appreciate it, sub-average drivel for the rest of us. Most people will play it for twenty minutes and never touch it again.

39

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS

Developer: Xplosiv
Publisher: Xplosiv
Players: 1-2
Memory Save: 893KB
Widescreen: No
50-60Hz: No
Surround Sound: No

GAMEFAX

Sports | Shit | Hard | Budget

SIR WALTER RALLY: It's rare to see a rally, since it's so hard just to serve the damn ball.

"THAT JUST LEAVES BADMINTON TO COME, THEN..."

SPINDRIVE PING PONG

Your childhood days in the youth club games room – in digital form! Anyone... hello... is this thing on?

"The first ping pong game on PS2!" screams *Spindrive*'s box – but did the developers ever stop to think that just maybe the reason why there are no ping pong games on PS2 is because no one actually cares about ping pong in the first place? At least not professional ping pong. Christ, the more we say 'ping pong' the more we realize what a ridiculous name for a sport it is. Seriously... ping pong? Who calls a sport 'ping pong' anyway? Ping Pong. ARGH STOP SAYING IT!

But let's get down to it – is *Spindrive* any good? Is it worth ten whole pounds? Well, the simple answer is 'no'. It's not worth ten pounds. In fact we'd probably have more fun sitting at home *burning* ten pounds. Professional ping pong is unbelievably fast. This isn't. It's slow, the serving mechanic is confusing and difficult and just hitting the ball is harder than anything should ever be. Everyone who saw it running said "It looks like a PSone game!" and "Surely this isn't a PS2 game?" – and rightly so; it looks like something that fell out of programmer's bin. And the music sounds like it was produced on the shittest, tinniest synthesizer in the world.

It's easy to slag *Spindrive* off. Too, too easy. But we can't really picture anyone buying and enjoying it, even for a tenner. We appreciate that *Pong*, one of the first games ever created, was a ping pong title – but you wouldn't play *Pong* now, would you? *Spindrive* is a poor sim of a sport that should never have returned to videogame land and we wish they hadn't bothered. Why did they bother at all? We despair, we really do. **Nathan Irvine**

■ *Spindrive is out now, if you must.*

PSM² VERDICT

A dodgy simulation of an even dodgier sport. Avoid this as you would a visit to the bum doctor – it really does pong... Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha [dies].

32

"THIS BLADE NEEDS SHARPENING"

BLADE: TRINITY

Blade's battle against the vamps heats up with some new allies.

Three films into the franchise and Blade's (Wesley Snipes) struggle to rid the world of vampires continues unabated. The half-human/half-vampire warrior isn't having an easy time of it: not only has the fang club tricked him into killing a human and led the cops directly to his door, he's faced with the death of stalwart sidekick Whistler (Kristofferson). But then he gets help from an unexpected source – Whistler's daughter, Abigail, (Biel) and a group called The Night Stalkers. A cross between a Gap catalogue and a militia unit, the Stalkers are led by Abigail and the wisecracking Hannibal King (Reynolds). At first, the ever-gruff Blade is loathe to let them into his world. But once he sees them in action, he realises they might actually be useful. And he'll need all the help he can get, since the toothy types' real plan is to unearth and reanimate the ultimate vampire...

"A FLASHY, NOISY, IPOD-ADVERTISING WANNABE THRILL RIDE – A MISSED OPPORTUNITY"

TOOTHLESS

It sounds like the set-up for one hell of a movie. It *should* be just that. And with David Goyer, the scripting talent behind both previous Blade films grabbing the megaphone to call the shots, you'd expect the ultimate experience. Sadly, what you actually get is a flashy, noisy, iPod-advertising wannabe thrill ride that has its moments, but never even comes close to reaching the heights of the first two films. Goyer never keeps a solid hand on his script, letting the movie spiral out of control.

STARRING
- Wesley Snipes
- Ryan Reynolds
- Jessica Biel
- Parker Posey
- Dominic Purcell
- Kris Kristofferson
- John Michael Higgins
- Triple H

DIRECTOR
- David Goyer

CERTIFICATE
- 18 TBC

PRICE
- £19.99

RELEASE
- Out now

Sure, Biel looks smokin' as she kills vampires, and Ryan Reynolds has a decent way with a quip, but there's very little else to keep us entertained. Blade himself gets astonishingly little to do, and mostly relies upon a greatest hits compilation of moments from the earlier movies. Meanwhile, the alleged uber-vamp (Purcell) just turns out to be yet another "mysterious" (read: paint-dryingly boring) Euro-trasher with something that looks like one of Lord Of The Ring's Orcs lurking inside her. It's clear that this movie was supposed to launch the Night Stalkers off into their own franchise, but on the evidence of this, there's little point in the effort. Given the talent involved here, this is a major missed opportunity.

PSM2 VERDICT

MOVIE	GOOD+BAD	DVD
+ There are one or two great set-pieces. – But we've seen it all before, and better.	– Reynolds has some amusing lines. – The villains are tedious in the extreme.	+ Some quite decent featurettes. – Hugely pretentious Goyer interview.

EXTRAS

The 16 featurettes covering all aspects of production range from great to average. Goyer displays an ego the size of an iceberg by interviewing *himself*, and there's a chuckle-worthy gag reel.

IT'S BETTER THAN...
DRACULA 2001

IT'S WORSE THAN...
BLADE 2

A lot of stylish scenes that don't add up to a decent movie, Blade 3 is a sorry way to end the franchise – at least, it would be, if it were really to be the end...

48

"PUT BEZ IN THE SEQUEL – CALL IT 'THE MANCUNIAN CANDIDATE'"

THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE

Denzel Washington's going totally out of his mind in this conspiracy remake.

STARRING
- Denzel Washington
- Liev Schreiber
- Meryl Streep
- Jon Voight
- Ted Levine
- Anthony Mackie
- Robyn Hitchcock
- Paul Lazar

DIRECTOR
- Jonathan Demme

CERTIFICATE
- 15

PRICE
- £15.99

RELEASE
- Out now

Serving during the first Gulf War, Major Ben Marco (Washington) was knocked unconscious by an enemy soldier as Sergeant Raymond Shaw (Schreiber) heroically saved the other troops in their unit. But did he? Now plagued by dreams that tell a different story, Marco discovers they've been brainwashed – there's a conspiracy to make Shaw look like a hero so he can win a place as the USA's next Vice-President. But the deeper Marco gets, the further the manipulation runs. Soon he's fighting for his life as the tycoons behind Shaw's nomination close in to stop anyone else finding out the truth.

MIND WARPING

Jonathan Demme (Silence Of The Lambs) is the perfect person to tackle this remake of a classic 1962 thriller. And the result is one of the few "re-imaginings" that works. Undermining expectation and keeping you guessing at every turn, Demme turns the screws until you're not sure whether Washington really has made it all up. Meanwhile, Schreiber's Shaw never comes off as a stereotypical villain: he's more a pawn in the machinations plotted by his sinister, politically motivated mother (Streep). Demme has you caring for Marco's plight even as he twists the screws all the while and turns up the tension by notches. Smart and superbly made.

PSM VERDICT

MOVIE	GOOD+BAD	DVD
+ Fantastic script and full of tension. – Occasionally drags in one or two places.	+ Superb Gulf war flashbacks – Very occasionally a little bit hammy.	+ A solid, interesting commentary. – The screen tests are all a bit unnecessary.

EXTRAS

Demme and co-writer Daniel Pyne talk us through the movie, while Schreiber's screen test is a pointless little addition. Wrapping up the package are a couple of decent featurettes.

IT'S BETTER THAN... CYPHER

IT'S WORSE THAN... MARATHON MAN

A solid, gripping thriller with great turns from Washington, Schreiber and Streep. One of the few remakes that actually improves on the original.

82

AFTER THE SUNSET

STARRING
- Pierce Brosnan
- Salma Hayek

DIRECTOR
- Brett Ratner

CERTIFICATE
- 12

PRICE
- £19.99

RELEASE
- Out Now

Expert thief Max Burdett (Brosnan) has pulled off his last big heist and plans to retire in a tropical island paradise with long-time girlfriend Lola (Hayek). The lucky bas... Trouble is, though he's sworn to get out of the stealing game, Lola's not really convinced that he can settle down and live the domestic lifestyle. Also seeking proof is FBI agent Stan Lloyd (Woody Harrelson) who arrives to check up on the couple. Oh, and a cruise liner has just shown up with a priceless diamond on board. Will Max give in to temptation? Slick and sleekly directed by Brett Ratner, Sunset never troubles the brain, but is almost fun – particularly with Hayek in a series of revealing bikinis. But isn't everyone tired of Pierce Brosnan taking on these suave, gentleman thief-style roles?

45

WITHOUT A PADDLE

STARRING
- Matthew Lillard
- Seth Green

DIRECTOR
- Steven Brill

CERTIFICATE
- 12

PRICE
- £15.99

RELEASE
- Out now.

The funeral of a friend reunites long-time buddies Dan (Green), Jerry (Lillard) and Tom (Dax Shepard). But it's more than the ceremony: they learn that their former associate was obsessed with some stolen loot that disappeared somewhere in the wilds of Oregon. The city-dwellers decide to set out on a trip to find it, but end up falling prey the every danger the wilderness has to offer, from stoned rednecks to vicious critters.

Yes, we're in fish-out-of-water territory again, with Paddle coming off as Deliverance-with-laughs. Though not many of them – the comic highlights are few and far between in this messy movie, and it simply never quite strikes the right tone. The leads do their best, but most of the material just falls flat on its face.

39

Films from another space and time

ANIMANIA

TRIGUN: VOLUME 1

One of the late 90s' most lauded anime series gets a DVD re-release and it's just as entertaining as ever. Expert gunman Vash the Stampede is being pursued across a barren Wild West-style desert by bounty hunters hellbent on claiming the 60,000,000 'double dollars' on his head. The blend of comedy and insane action (lots of Matrix-style gunfights) make this well worth a watch.

89

LADY DEATH: THE MOTION PICTURE

Lady Death revolves around Hope, a girl who sells her soul to Satan. Thing is, she's actually Satan's daughter and, as revenge for her father's deception, decides to, er, kill him. What follows is a massive battle across Hell with Lady Death at the fore, shimmying around in obscenely-tight bodysuits and stabbing lots of demons in the head. Entertaining.

80

KINO'S JOURNEY: VOLUME 4

Our favourite series continues being thoroughly excellent as Kino explores a land where two feuding countries settle their disputes by engaging in a twisted cull of the natives surrounding their cities as part of a kind of 'olympic games' with tanks and machine guns. Obviously Kino isn't too pleased with this, but finds herself completely powerless to stop the madness. Brilliant.

90

ALSO RELEASED

ENDURING LOVE

■ Out Now ■ Cert 18 ■ Price £19.99

Forget the chick-flick sounding title, this a chilling, sinister and supremely acted stalker thriller with top turns from Layer Cake's Daniel Craig and Rhys Ifans.

75

DUEL

■ Out Now ■ Cert PG ■ Price £17.99

Steven Spielberg's first stab at major movie-making drives up on DVD at last. A nail-biting road-rage thriller as a driver battles a homicidal trucker.

89

TAXI

■ Out Now ■ Cert 15 ■ Price £15.99

This month's Avoid At All Costs release, Taxi is a car wreck of a comedy that's neither funny nor exciting. The supermodel crooks are the only reason to watch it.

21

NATIONAL TREASURE

■ Out now ■ Cert PG(TBC) ■ Price £19.99

Producer Jerry Bruckheimer tries to turn Nic Cage into Indiana Jones, but what we get is an intermittently exciting chase movie that wants to be a history lesson.

60

©UIP, Tartan Films, Universal Television Networks, Touchstone Pictures & Jerry Bruckheimer Film, New Line Productions, 20th Century Fox

PSM2 Presents...

THE TRUTH

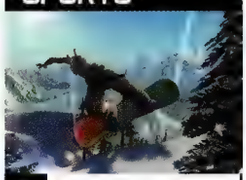
Every game PSM2 has ever reviewed in one fact-packed feature. It's the ultimate source of PS2 knowledge.

TOP FIVE

BEAT-'EM-UPS

1. SOUL CALIBUR 2
2. TEKKEN 5
3. FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 2
4. HYPER STREET FIGHTER 2
5. MORTAL KOMBAT: DECEPTION

EXTREME SPORTS



1. SSX3
2. TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3
3. SSX TRICKY
4. TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND
5. DOWNHILL DOMINATION

ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

1. FINAL FANTASY X
2. DARK CHRONICLES
3. KINGDOM HEARTS
4. FINAL FANTASY X-2
5. DISGAEA: HOUR OF DARKNESS

GAME NAME	PUBLISHER	ISSUE	SCORE	AWARD
13 (XIII)	Ubisoft	42	87%	
2002 FIFA WORLD CUP	EA	22	71%	
7 BLADES	Konami	11	72%	
ACE COMBAT 4: SHATTERED SKIES	Namco	17	80%	
ACE COMBAT 5	Namco	57	79%	
ACTIVISION ANTHOLOGY	Activision	36	40%	
AGE OF EMPIRES 2	Konami	15	76%	
AGGRESSIVE INLINE	Acclaim	24	83%	
AIRBLADE	Sony	16	77%	
ALIAS	Acclaim	47	79%	
ALEX FERGUSON'S PLAYER MANAGER	3DO	15	65%	
ALIEN HOMINID	Zoo Digital	61	74%	
ALL-STAR BASEBALL 2004	Acclaim	35	67%	
ALONE IN THE DARK: THE NEW NIGHTMARE	Atari	15	66%	
ALTER ECHO	THQ	41	66%	
ALTERED BEAST	Sega	61	42%	
AMPLITUDE	Sony	40	87%	
APE ESCAPE 2	SCEI	30	80%	
AQUA AQUA	SCI	04	71%	
ARCTIC THUNDER	Midway	16	58%	
ARC: TWILIGHT OF SPIRITS	Sony	46	68%	
ARMORED CORE 2: ANOTHER AGE	Metro	24	56%	
ARMY MEN AIR ATTACK: BLADE'S REVENGE	3DO	11	47%	
ARMY MEN RTS	3DO	24	56%	
ARMY MEN: SARGE'S HEROES 2	3DO	09	40%	
ASTRO BOY	Sega	61	69%	
ATHENS 2004	Sony	51	51%	
A-TRAIN 6	Midas	49	60%	
ATV OFFROAD FURY 2	THQ	40	73%	
ATV QUAD POWER RACING 2	Acclaim	33	68%	
ASTERIX AND OBELIX XXL	Atari	46	60%	
AUTO MODELLISTA	Capcom	28	80%	
BAD BOYS 2	Empire	48	51%	
BACKYARD WRESTLING	Eidos	42	45%	
BACKYARD WRESTLING 2	Eidos	56	46%	
BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE	Virgin Interactive	17	70%	
BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE 2	VU Games	4	82%	
BARBARIAN	VU Games	44	66%	
THE BARD'S TALE	Ubisoft	60	74%	
BASS STRIKE	THQ	18	64%	
BATMAN VENGEANCE	Ubisoft	17	48%	
BATMAN VS. THE ARMY OF TSU	Ubisoft	44	43%	
BATTLE ENGINE AQUILA	Atari	31	78%	
BATTLESTAR GALACTICA	Vivendi	44	59%	
BEN HUR: BLOOD OF BRAVES	Microids	34	42%	
BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL	Ubisoft	42	82%	
BIG MUTHA TRUCKERS	Empire	31	79%	
BIONICLE	EA	41	38%	
BLADE 2	Activision	28	51%	
BLOOD OMEN 2	Eidos	22	79%	
BLOODRAYNE	Vivendi	36	67%	
BLOODY ROAR 3	Virgin	11	79%	
BLOOD WILL TELL	Sega	57	60%	
BLOWOUT	Majesco	58	49%	
BMX XXX	Acclaim	30	58%	
BOMBERMAN KART	Konami	41	51%	
BOUNCER, THE	SCEE	11	66%	
BOXING CHAMPIONS	Midas	41	40%	
BREATH OF FIRE: DRAGON QUARTER	Capcom	41	70%	
BRITNEY'S DANCE BEAT	THQ	24	58%	
BROTHERS IN ARMS: THE ROAD TO HILL 30	Ubisoft	60	82%	
BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER: CHAOS BLEEDS	Vivendi	41	74%	
BUJINGAI	Taito	47	62%	
BURNOUT	Acclaim	15	88%	
BURNOUT 2: POINT OF IMPACT	**Acclaim**	**28**	**91%**	
Beautiful, emotional racing that you have to play to fully appreciate.				
BURNOUT 3: TAKEDOWN	**EA**	**54**	**93%**	
Smooth, colourful, varied, hilarious, fast and online too. You'd be a fool not to buy it.				
CABELA'S DANGEROUS HUNTS	Activision	53	57%	
CALL OF DUTY: FINEST HOUR	Activision	56	87%	
CAPCOM FIGHTING JAM	Capcom	58	53%	
CAPCOM VS SNK 2: MARK OF THE MILLENNIUM 2001	Capcom	17	83%	
CART FURY	Midway	12	65%	
CASPER: SPIRIT DIMENSIONS	TDK Mediactive	22	48%	
CASTLEWEEN	Wanadoo	30	45%	
CATWOMAN	EA	52	30%	
CEL DAMAGE OVERDRIVE	Play It	36	50%	
CENTRE COURT: HARD HITTER 2	Midas	33	62%	
CHAMPIONS OF NORRATH: REALMS OF EVERQUEST	Ubisoft	47	82%	
CHAMPIONS: RETURN TO ARMS	Ubisoft	60	69%	
CHAOS LEGION	Capcom	39	86%	
CHOPLIFTER: CRISIS SHIELD	Xicat Interactive	35	48%	
CIRCUS MAXIMUS: CHARIOT WARS	THQ	25	55%	
CITY CRISIS	Take 2	16	62%	

GAME NAME	PUBLISHER	ISSUE	SCORE	AWARD
CLOCK TOWER 3	Capcom	37	59%	
CLUB FOOTBALL	Codemasters	42	61%	
CLUB FOOTBALL 2	Codemasters	55	67%	
COLIN MCRAE RALLY 04	**Codemasters**	**40**	**92%**	
A defining moment for rally games. If you like rallying, you've got to get this.				
COLD FEAR	Ubisoft	60	83%	
COLIN MCRAE RALLY 2005	Codemasters	54	88%	
COMBAT ELITE: WW2 PARATROOPERS	Acclaim	52	77%	
COMMANDOS 2: MEN OF COURAGE	Eidos	24	79%	
CONFLICT: DESERT STORM	SCi	27	78%	
CONFLICT DESERT STORM 2	SCi	39	88%	
CONFLICT: VIETNAM	SCi	54	76%	
CONFLICT ZONE	Ubisoft	22	79%	
CONSTANTINE	SCi	60	60%	
CONTRA: SHATTERED SOLDIER	Konami Europe	32	52%	
CRASH BANDICOOT: THE WRATH OF CORTEX	Vivendi	17	66%	
CRASH 'N BURN	Eidos	57	46%	
CRASH TWINSANITY	Vivendi	55	49%	
CRAZY TAXI	Acclaim	10	80%	
CRICKET 2002	EA	18	41%	
CRIMSON SEA 2	Koei	53	70%	
CRIMSON TEARS	Capcom	51	74%	
CRISIS ZONE	Namco	53	59%	
CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON	Ubisoft	44	35%	
CY GIRLS	Konami	50	74%	
DAKAR 2	Acclaim	34	50%	
DANCE UK	Big Ben	42	67%	
DANCING STAGE FUSION	Konami	58	67%	
DANCING STAGE MEGAMIX	Konami Europe	36	85%	
DARK ANGEL	Vivendi	34	45%	
DARK CHRONICLE	**SCEE**	**37**	**90%**	
Debatably better than Final Fantasy X, but edged out in pomp and presence.				
DARK CLOUD	Sony	11	81%	
DARK SUMMIT	THQ	21	56%	
DAVE MIRRA FREESTYLE BMX 2	Acclaim	14	76%	
DEAD OR ALIVE 2	SCEE	05	83%	
DEAD TO RIGHTS	EA	38	70%	
DEATH BY DEGREES	Sony	60	42%	
DEFENDER	Midway	31	76%	
DEF JAM: FIGHT FOR NY	EA	54	86%	
DEF JAM VENDETTA	EA	36	75%	
DETONATOR	Midas	47	69%	
DESTRUCTION DERBY ARENAS	Sony	45	42%	
DEUS EX: THE CONSPIRACY	Eidos	22	88%	
DEVIL MAY CRY	**Capcom**	**15**	**90%**	
Blindingly gorgeous and cracking to play. A brilliant advert for PS2.				
DEVIL MAY CRY 2	Capcom	33	72%	
DEVIL MAY CRY 3	Capcom	60	83%	
DIE HARD VENDETTA	Vivendi	38	54%	
DINO STALKER	Capcom	26	58%	
DISGAEA: HOUR OF DARKNESS	Koei	49	86%	
DISNEY'S EXTREME SKATE ADVENTURE	Disney	40	78%	
DISNEY'S STITCH: EXPERIMENT 626	Disney	27	64%	
DJ: DECKS & FX	Sony	53	74%	
DONALD DUCK PK	Ubisoft	30	64%	
DOWNFORCE	Titus	23	64%	
DOT HACK INFECTION: PART ONE	Atari	47	58%	
DOWNHILL DOMINATION	Codemasters	46	80%	
DRAGON BALL Z: BUDOKAI	Atari	30	60%	
DRAKENGARD	Take 2	50	75%	
DRAGON RAGE	3DO	23	43%	
DRAKAN: THE ANCIENTS' GATES	Sony	20	75%	
DRIV3R	**Atari**	**50**	**90%**	
Superb in Free Ride, less so in Story Mode, but balls-out street-driving fun.				
DRIVEN	Bam!	17	46%	
DRIVEN TO DESTRUCTION	Atari	55	65%	
DRIVING EMOTION TYPE-S	Squaresoft	01	57%	
DR MUTO	Midway	33	59%	
DROME RACERS	EA	31	50%	
DROPSHIP	Sony	18	75%	
DYNASTY TACTICS 2	Koei	44	69%	
DYNASTY WARRIORS 3: XTREME LEGENDS	Koei	34	69%	
DYNASTY WARRIORS 4	Koei	37	80%	
DYNASTY WARRIORS 4: EMPIRES	Koei	53	70%	
DYNASTY WARRIORS 4: XTREME LEGENDS	Koei	46	70%	
ECCO THE DOLPHIN: DEFENDER OF THE FUTURE	Sony	18	52%	
EGGO MANIA	Kemco	27	40%	
EJAY CLUBWORLD	Empire	26	84%	
ENDGAME	Empire	25	49%	
ENGLAND INTERNATIONAL FOOTBALL	Codemasters	49	62%	
ENTER THE MATRIX	Atari	37	81%	
EOE: EVE OF EXTINCTION	Eidos	22	71%	
EPHEMERAL FANTASIA	Konami	12	80%	
ESCAPE FROM MONKEY ISLAND	Activision	12	82%	

BRONZE AWARD: A very enjoyable and solid game scoring 70-79% | SILVER AWARD: A top-notch PS2 title that scored between 80-89% | GOLD AWARD: A game scoring 90% or more. An absolute classic.

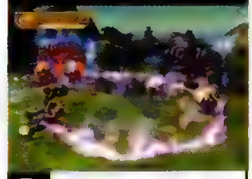
GAME NAME	PUBLISHER	ISSUE	SCORE	AWARD
ESPN INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD	Konami	04	63%	
ESPN INTERNATIONAL WINTER SPORTS	Konami	20	55%	
ESPN NATIONAL HOCKEY NIGHT	Konami	09	68%	
ESPN NBA 2NIGHT 2002	Konami	24	72%	
ESPN NFL 2K5	Take Two	59	83%	
ESPN NHL 2K5	Take Two	59	71%	
ESPN NHL HOCKEY	Sega	44	78%	
ESPN X GAMES SKATEBOARDING	Konami	15	62%	
ESPN WINTER X GAMES SNOWBOARDING	Konami	04	70%	
ESPN WINTER X GAMES SNOWBOARDING 2	Konami	20	69%	
EVERBLUE 2	Capcom Eurosoft	34	56%	
EVERQUEST ONLINE ADVENTURES	SCEE	41	70%	
EVIL DEAD: A FISTFUL OF BOOMSTICK	THQ	37	68%	
EVOLUTION SKATEBOARDING	Konami	33	54%	
EVOLUTION SNOWBOARDING	Konami	33	43%	
EXTERMINATION	Sony	09	78%	
EXTREME-G 3	Acclaim	13	60%	
EYE TOY: PLAY	SCEE	38	82%	
EYETOY: PLAY 2	Sony	56	75%	
F1 2002	EA	24	84%	
F1 CAREER CHALLENGE	EA	37	58%	
F1 RACING CHAMPIONSHIP	Ubisoft	07	66%	
FALLOUT: BROTHERHOOD OF STEEL	Interplay	48	46%	
FAME ACADEMY	Ubisoft	44	38%	
FANTAVISION	SCEE	01	85%	
FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING, THE	Vivendi	30	70%	
FERRARI F355 CHALLENGE	SCEE	27	67%	
FIFA 2005	EA	54	79%	
FIFA STREET	EA	60	63%	
FIGHT CLUB	Vivendi	59	19%	
FIGHT NIGHT 2004	EA	48	88%	
FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 2	EA	61	89%	
FINAL FANTASY X	**SCEE**	**23**	**91%**	
The most life-swallowing RPG of them all – even with the random battles.				
FINAL FANTASY 10-2	Square Enix	44	83%	
FINAL FANTASY XI (IMPORT)	Square Enix	49	85%	
FINDING NEMO	THQ	41	71%	
FIREBLADE	Midway	24	68%	
FIREFIGHTER FD18	Konami	49	76%	
FLAT OUT	Empire	56	77%	
FLIPNIC	Ubisoft	45	76%	
FORBIDDEN SIREN	Sony	44	80%	
FORD RACING 3	Empire	56	34%	
FORGOTTEN REALMS: DEMON STONE	Atari	54	74%	
FORMULA ONE 2004	SCEE	52	65%	
FREAK OUT	Swing! AG Media	13	79%	
FREAKY FLYERS	Midway	42	77%	
FREEDOM FIGHTERS	**EA**	**40**	**92%**	
An utterly compelling squad-based shooter that's intelligent and addictive.				
FREEKSTYLE	EA	25	59%	
FREESTYLE METAL X	EA	40	74%	
FREQUENCY	SCEE	23	64%	
FULL SPECTRUM WARRIOR	THQ	61	85%	
FUR FIGHTERS	Acclaim	10	86%	
FUTURAMA	SCi	37	75%	
FUTURE TACTICS	Jo Wood	57	64%	
G1 JOCKEY 3	Koei UK	34	43%	
GALERIANS: ASH	Big Ben	34	50%	
GALLOP RACER	Zoo Digital	41	39%	
GALLOP RACER 2	Zoo Digital	60	34%	
GAMETRAK: DARK WIND	In2Games	54	55%	
GET ON DA MIC	Eidos	56	49%	
GETAWAY, THE	SCEE	31	78%	
GETAWAY: BLACK MONDAY, THE	Sony	56	71%	
GHOST RECON	Ubisoft	30	65%	
GHOST RECON: JUNGLE STORM	Ubisoft	47	75%	
GHOST RECON 2	Ubisoft	57	63%	
GIANTS: CITIZEN KABUTO	Interplay	17	80%	
GIFT	Acclaim	12	51%	
GITAROO MAN	THQ	22	79%	
GLADIUS	Activision	42	52%	
GOBLIN COMMANDER: UNLEASH THE HORDE	Jaleco	47	65%	
GOLDENEYE: ROGUE AGENT	EA	56	58%	
GRADIUS V	Konami	51	83%	
GRANDIA 2	Ubisoft	23	45%	
GRAND PRIX CHALLENGE	Atari	31	85%	
GRAND THEFT AUTO 3	**Take 2**	**16**	**92%**	
Its scope and and tiny touches are some of the most impressive on PS2				
GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY	**Rockstar**	**29**	**97%**	
The music, the styling, the freedom . (almost) nothing beats it A great leap for games.				
GRAND THEFT AUTO: SAN ANDREAS	**Rockstar**	**56**	**99%**	
Simply the best game on PS2. Mind-boggling in scale and as involving as it gets.				
GRAND TOUR RACING GT-R 400	Midas	51	53%	
GRAN TURISMO 3	**SCEE**	**13**	**93%**	
The most complete racing game yet and one you can truly sink your teeth into.				
GRAN TURISMO 4	**SCEE**	**59**	**92%**	
No radical departure, and no online mode, but still the most serious racing sim on PS2.				
GRAN TURISMO 4: PROLOGUE	Sony	50	79%	
GRAVITY GAMES BIKE: STREET, VERT, DIRT	Midway	28	48%	
GREAT ESCAPE, THE	SCi	39	73%	
GREGORY HORROR SHOW	Capcom	42	70%	
GROOVE RIDER	Play It	45	52%	
G-SURFERS	Midas	16	49%	
GTC: AFRICA	Rage	16	74%	
GUILTY GEAR X2	Big Ben	35	84%	
GUILTY GEAR X2: RELOAD	Zoo Digital	57	66%	
GUMBALL 3000	SCi	29	73%	
GUNDAM: FEDERATION VS ZEON	Atari	29	39%	
GUNFIGHTER 2: REVENGE OF JESSE JAMES	Ubisoft	35	40%	
GUNGRAVE	Activision	30	68%	
GUN GRIFFON BLAZE	Virgin	07	70%	
HALF-LIFE	**VIVENDI**	**16**	**90%**	
A port of one of the best PC games ever made. This is a must-buy for all FPS fans.				
HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS	EA	31	65%	
HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN	EA	51	76%	
HARRY POTTER: THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE	EA	44	55%	
HAUNTED MANSION, THE	TDK Mediactive	46	70%	
HAVEN: CALL OF THE KING	Midway	29	81%	
HEADHUNTER	Sega	19	81%	
HEADHUNTER: REDEMPTION	Sega	53	53%	

GAME NAME	PUBLISHER	ISSUE	SCORE	AWARD
HERDY GERDY	Eidos	21	69%	
HIGH HEAT MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL	3DO	24	71%	
HITMAN 2: SILENT ASSASSIN	Eidos	28	89%	
HITMAN: CONTRACTS	**EIDOS**	**49**	**90%**	
A game that promotes experimentation and plays brilliantly. A twisted funhouse.				
HOTWHEELS VELOCITY X MAXIMUM JUSTICE	THQ	31	51%	
HULK, THE	Vivendi	38	70%	
HUNTER WAYWARD: THE RECKONING	Vivendi	41	30%	
HYPER STREET FIGHTER II: 15TH ANNIVERSARY EDT.	Capcom	46	89%	
ICO	SCEA	17	85%	
INCREDIBLES, THE	THQ	57	72%	
INDIANA JONES AND THE EMPEROR'S TOMB	Activision	39	80%	
INDYCAR SERIES 2005	Codemasters	53	63%	
I-NINJA	SCEE	45	85%	
INTERNATIONAL CUE CLUB	Midas	24	56%	
ISLAND EXTREME STUNTS	SCEE	33	65%	
ISLE OF MAN TT SUPERBIKES	Jester	53	59%	
ISS3	Konami	34	78%	
ITALIAN JOB: LA HEIST, THE	Eidos	40	51%	
JADE COCOON 2	Ubisoft	22	70%	
JAK & DAXTER	Sony	18	85%	
JAK 2: RENEGADE	**SCEE**	**40**	**93%**	
Vast, well-built and bursting with distractions. How can others compete?				
JAK 3	Sony	56	88%	
JAMES BOND 007: EVERYTHING OR NOTHING	EA	46	77%	
JAMES BOND 007 IN AGENT UNDER FIRE	EA	17	88%	
JAMES BOND 007 IN... NIGHTFIRE	EA	30	78%	
JET SKI RIDERS	Eidos	18	38%	
JONNY MOSELEY MAD TRIX	3DO	20	38%	
JUDGE DREDD: DREDD VS DEATH	Vivendi	40	83%	
JUICED	Acclaim	53	59%	
JUNGLE BOOK GROOVE PARTY	Ubisoft	10	50%	
JURASSIC PARK: OPERATION GENESIS	Vivendi	34	61%	
KATAMARI DAMASHII	Namco	49	83%	
KARAOKE STAGE	Konami	49	85%	
KENGO	Ubisoft	09	60%	
KELLY SLATER'S PRO SURFER	Activision	28	75%	
KESSEN II	KOEI	20	66%	
KESSEN III	KOEI	61	82%	
KILL.SWITCH	Sony	44	78%	
KILLZONE	Sony	55	88%	
KING ARTHUR	Konami	57	37%	
KING OF FIGHTERS 2000 / 2001	Ignition	55	73%	
KING OF FIGHTERS: MAXIMUM IMPACT	Ignition	61	79%	
KING OF ROUTE 66	Sega	41	44%	
KINGDOM HEARTS	SCEE	29	88%	
KING'S FIELD: THE ANCIENT CITY	Metro3D Inc	24	54%	
KLONOA 2	Namco	10	73%	
KNIGHT RIDER 2	Koch Media	57	21%	
KNOCKOUT KINGS 2001	EA	07	79%	
KNOCKOUT KINGS 2002	EA	21	83%	
KURI KURI MIX	Empire	10	78%	
KYA: DARK LINEAGE	Atari	45	73%	
LA PUCELLE TACTICS	Mastiff	52	80%	
LEGAIA 2: DUEL SAGA	Eidos	28	59%	
LEGEND OF KAY	Koch Media	59	69%	
LEGENDS OF WRESTLING 2	Acclaim	33	68%	
LEGION: LEGEND OF EXCALIBUR	Midway	27	70%	
LEGO RACERS 2	Lego Software	18	42%	
LEISURE SUIT LARRY: MAGNA CUM LAUDE	Vivendi	54	80%	
LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS	Activision	58	55%	
LE MANS 24 HOURS	Atari	12	73%	
LETHAL SKIES	THQ	27	63%	
LETHAL SKIES 2	Big Ben	48	68%	
LE TOUR DE FRANCE	Konami	23	75%	
LE TOUR DE FRANCE: CENTENARY EDITION	Konami	38	71%	
LMA MANAGER 2005	Codemasters	55	80%	
LONDON RACER: WORLD CHALLENGE	Davilex	40	59%	
LOONY TUNES SPACE RACE	Atari	19	65%	
LORD OF THE RINGS: THE THIRD AGE	EA	55	53%	
LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS	EA	29	76%	
LOTUS CHALLENGE	Virgin	16	60%	
MACE GRIFFIN: BOUNTY HUNTER	Vivendi	38	79%	
MADDEN NFL 2005	EA	54	82%	
MAD MAESTROS	Eidos	22	70%	
MAFIA	Take Two	46	71%	
MALICE	Evolved Games	51	60%	
MARK OF KRI, THE	SCEA	33	74%	
MARVEL VS CAPCOM 2	Capcom	29	84%	
MASHED	Empire Int.	51	79%	
MASTER RALLYE	Microids	24	55%	
MAXIMO	Konami	20	84%	
MAXIMO VS THE ARMY OF ZIN	Konami	42	81%	
MAX PAYNE	Take 2	19	82%	
MAX PAYNE 2: THE FALL OF MAX PAYNE	Rockstar	45	65%	
MDK2 ARMAGEDDON	Interplay	09	76%	
MEDAL OF HONOR: FRONTLINE	EA	23	89%	
MEGA MAN X8	Capcom	59	45%	
MEN IN BLACK 2: ALIEN ESCAPE	Atari	26	42%	
MERCENARIES	Lucas Arts	58	88%	
METAL ARMS: GLITCH IN THE SYSTEM	Vivendi	41	87%	
METAL GEAR SOLID 2	**Konami**	**17**	**96%**	
Near perfectly balanced and worth every bit of the hype. An all-time classic.				
METAL GEAR SOLID 3	**Konami**	**57**	**97%**	
We didn't think it could get better. We were wrong. An epic masterpiece.				
METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SUBSTANCE	Konami	33	78%	
METAL SLUG 3	Playmore	55	79%	
MIAMI VICE	Atomic Planet	58	13%	
MICRO MACHINES	Atari	30	59%	
MIDNIGHT CLUB 2	Rockstar	37	80%	
MIDWAY ARCADE TREASURES	Midway	45	48%	
MIDWAY ARCADE TREASURES 2	Midway	55	71%	
MIKE TYSON HEAVYWEIGHT BOXING	Codemasters	23	61%	
MINORITY REPORT	Activision	31	60%	
MISSION IMPOSSIBLE: OPERATION SURMA	Atari	44	59%	
MONKEY MANIA	Sony	60	69%	
MONSTERS, INC	Sony	19	41%	
MORTAL KOMBAT: DEADLY ALLIANCE	Midway	33	85%	
MORTAL KOMBAT: DECEPTION	Midway	54	85%	
MOTO GP3	SCEE	35	74%	

BRONZE AWARD: A very enjoyable and solid game scoring 70-79% | SILVER AWARD: A top-notch PS2 title that scored between 80-89% | GOLD AWARD: A game scoring 90% or more. An absolute classic.

TOP FIVE

PLATFORMERS



1. RATCHET AND CLANK 3
2. JAK 2: RENEGADE
3. BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL
4. MAXIMO
5. RAYMAN 3: HOODLUM HAVOC

FIRST-PERSON SHOOTERS

1. TIMESPLITTERS 2
2. HALF-LIFE
3. DEUS EX
4. CALL OF DUTY
5. KILLZONE

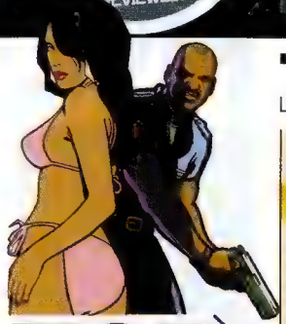
FOOTBALL

1. PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 4
2. FIFA 2003
3. LMA MANAGER 2004/2005
4. RED CARD SOCCER
5. THIS IS FOOTBALL 2005

ALL TIME BEST

1. GRAND THEFT AUTO: SAN ANDREAS
2. METAL GEAR SOLID 3
3. PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 4
4. TIMESPLITTERS 2
5. SSX3

4X4 EVOLUTION 2	28%
18 WHEELER	36%
AIR RANGER RESCUE HELICOPTER	24%
ALPINE RACER 3	31%
ARMY MEN: GREEN ROGUE	18%
ATLANTIS 3: THE NEW WORLD	19%
BUTT UGLY MARTIANS: ZOOM OR DOOM!	34%
CATWOMAN	30%
CAT IN THE HAT, THE	27%
CHARLIE'S ANGELS	14%
CRASHED	31%
CURSE: EYE OF ISIS, THE	24%
CYCLONE CIRCUS: POWER SAIL RACING	38%
DAVID BECKHAM SOCCER	24%
DISNEY'S DINOSAUR	35%
DONALD DUCK: QUACK ATTACK	29%
DRAGON'S LAIR 3D: SPECIAL ED.	27%
ETERNAL RING	35%
EX ZEUS	30%
EVIL TWIN: CYPRIEN'S CHRONICLES	39%
FIGHTBOX	11%
FLINTSTONES, VIVA ROCK VEGAS	19%
FRANK HERBERT'S DUNE	22%
FROGGER BEYOND	35%
GAUNTLET	36%
CELEBRITY DEATHMATCH	33%
GODAI	26%
GO GO COPTER	37%
GO GO GOLF	15%
GRADIUS 3 & 4	29%
HE-MAN: DEFENDER OF GRAYSKULL	15%
HIDDEN INVASION	21%
HUGO BUKKAZOOM	17%
INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE SOCCER	07%
IRON ACES 2	17%
JET ION GP	41%
KIDZ SPORTS: BASKETBALL	31%
KNIGHT RIDER	7%
LAKEMASTERS EX	36%
LARGO WINCH: EMPIRE UNDER THREAT	11%
LONDON RACER 2	39%
MARY-KATE AND ASHLEY:	
SWEET 16 LICENSED TO DRIVE	33%
MUSIC MAKER	43%
POLAROID PETE	35%
POWERDROME: RACE OF CHAMPIONS	22%
POWERPUFF GIRLS, THE	29%
PRYZM: THE DARK UNICORN	41%



TOP FIVE

NATHAN'S FAVOURITE GAMES OF ALL TIME

1 PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 4
No other game offers a rollercoaster of emotions like this. Football at its finest.

2 GRAN TURISMO 4
The most beautiful looking game on PS2 delivers the ultimate driving experience.

3 GTA: SAN ANDREAS
Gangsters, guns and ho's - the perfect formula for this fantastic toy-box 'o' fun.

4 MANHUNT
The ultimate psychological thriller on PS2. It never tries to tone down the body count.

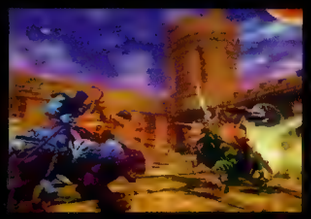
5 FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 2
Punch a man until he falls over. Simple. But this is technically the best beat-'em-up around

GAME NAME	PUBLISHER	ISSUE	SCORE	AWARD
MOTOR MAYHEM	Atari	15	63%	
MR GOLF	Midas Games	34	56%	
MR MOSKEETO	Eidos	22	52%	
MTV MUSIC GENERATOR 2	**Codemasters**	**10**	**90%**	
A musical pandora's box, offering professional results to everyone.				
MTX MOTOTRAX	Activision	49	79%	
MUMMY RETURNS, THE	Vivendi	17	46%	
MUSIC 3000	Jester Interactive	35	81%	
MX 2002	THQ	14	78%	
MX RIDER	Atari	15	62%	
MX SUPERFLY	THQ	27	72%	
MX UNLEASHED	THQ	48	75%	
MX VS. ATV: UNLEASHED	THQ	61	78%	
MYSTIC HEROES	Koei UK	34	67%	
NANO BREAKER	Konami	59	59%	
NAVAL OPS: COMMANDER	Koei	52	68%	
NAVAL OPS: WARSHIP GUNNER	Koei	41	63%	
NBA 2K3	Atari	35	70%	
NBA BALLERS	Midway	53	82%	
NBA JAM	Acclaim	42	77%	
NBA LIVE 2004	EA	42	84%	
NBA STREET VOLUME 2	EA	35	85%	
NBA STREET VOLUME 3	EA	60	87%	
NEED FOR SPEED 2	EA	55	87%	
NEXT GENERATION TENNIS 2003	Wanadoo	38	55%	
NFL 2K3	Atari	35	78%	
NFL STREET	EA	46	64%	
NFL STREET 2	EA	61	55%	
NHL HITZ 2003	Midway	28	80%	
NHL HITZ: PRO	Midway	42	80%	
NIGHTSHADE	Sega	46	73%	
NINJA ASSAULT	SCEE	27	71%	
NO ONE LIVES FOREVER	Vivendi	21	71%	
NY RACE	Wanadoo	17	40%	
OBSCURE	Ubisoft	54	80%	
ONI	Take 2	07	62%	
ONIMUSHA 2	Capcom	27	89%	
ONIMUSHA 3	**Capcom**	**50**	**92%**	
Provocative, exquisite gameplay backed up by plush visuals and a rousing score.				
ONIMUSHA: BLADE WARRIORS	Capcom	45	75%	
OPERATION WINBACK	Koei	08	68%	
ORPHEN	Activision	04	56%	
OUTLAW GOLF 2	Take 2	57	78%	
PAC-MAN WORLD 2	SCEE	33	75%	
PARAPPA THE RAPPER 2	Sony	16	75%	
PARIS-DAKAR RALLY	Acclaim	15	60%	
PENNY RACERS	Midas	16	43%	
PERFECT ACE PRO TENNIS	Oxygen Int.	38	38%	
PETER PAN: LEGEND OF NEVERLAND	Sony	20	50%	
PITFALL: THE LOST EXPEDITION	Activision	47	71%	
PIRATES: LEGEND OF BLACK KAT	EA	21	38%	
PLAYBOY: THE MANSION	Ubisoft	60	51%	
POLICE 24/7	Konami	19	49%	
POOL MASTER	Take 2	05	45%	
POOL PARADISE	Awesome Studio	48	72%	
POOL SHARK 2	Zoo Digital	57	56%	
PORTAL RUNNER	3DO	16	55%	
PREMIER MANAGER	Zoo Digital	31	80%	
PREMIER MANAGER 2004/2005	Zoo Digital	57	63%	
PRIDE FC	THQ	34	75%	
PRIMAL	SCEE	33	79%	
PRINCE OF PERSIA: WARRIOR WITHIN	Ubisoft	56	87%	
PRISONER OF WAR	Codemasters	24	73%	
PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 4	**Konami**	**55**	**94%**	
Inredible customisation, subterranean depth and sublime control. As rewarding as it gets.				
PROJECT EDEN	Eidos	14	86%	
PROJECT: SNOWBLIND	Eidos	59	83%	
PROJECT ZERO 2: CRIMSON BUTTERFLY	Tecmo	45	82%	
PRO RALLY 2002	Ubisoft	22	68%	
PSI-OPS: THE MINDGATE CONSPIRACY	Midway	52	86%	
PTO IV	Koei	48	41%	
THE PUNISHER	THQ	60	82%	
PUYO POP FEVER	Sega	46	85%	
QUAKE 3 REVOLUTION	Bullfrog	08	85%	
RAINBOW SIX 3	Ubisoft	47	77%	
RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP	SCi	24	56%	
RALLY FUSION: RACE OF CHAMPIONS	Activision	29	68%	
RATCHET & CLANK	**SCEE**	**29**	**91%**	
A labour of love on every crafted level. Packing a ton of ingenious gadgets.				
RATCHET & CLANK 2	SCEE	42	85%	
RATCHET & CLANK 3	**Sony**	**56**	**92%**	
PS2 platforming perfection. It gets no better than this. A must for all platforming fans.				
RAYMAN	Ubisoft	18	48%	
RAYMAN REVOLUTION	Ubisoft	05	68%	
RAYMAN 3: HOODLUM HAVOC	Ubisoft	34	80%	
RC REVENGE PRO	Acclaim	04	56%	
READY 2 RUMBLE: ROUND 2	Midway	04	82%	
RED CARD	Midway	23	80%	
RED DEAD REVOLVER	Rockstar	49	86%	
RED FACTION	THQ	11	88%	
RED FACTION 2	THQ	29	85%	
RED NINJA: END OF HONOUR	Vivendi Universal	61	73%	
REIGN OF FIRE	Bam!	30	71%	
RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA X	Capcom	13	80%	
RESIDENT EVIL: DEAD AIM	Capcom	37	68%	
RESIDENT EVIL SURVIVOR 2 CODE: VERONICA	Capcom	20	41%	
RESIDENT EVIL OUTBREAK	Capcom	45	86%	
RESIDENT EVIL OUTBREAK FILE 2	Capcom	57	71%	
RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN OP. RESURRECTION	Activision	38	80%	
REZ	Sony	18	66%	
RIBBIT KING	Atari	55	22%	
RICHARD BURNS RALLY	SCi	51	66%	
RIDGE RACER 5	Namco	01	72%	
RIDING SPIRITS	Bam!	27	46%	
RIDING SPIRITS 2	Capcom	50	48%	
RING OF RED	Konami	10	74%	
RISE TO HONOUR	Sony	47	71%	
ROBOTECH: BATTLECRY	TDK Mediactive	30	69%	
ROBOT WARS: ARENAS OF DESTRUCTION	BBC	16	63%	
ROADKILL	Terminal Reality	44	72%	
ROCKY	Rage	29	84%	
ROCKY LEGENDS	Ubisoft	55	66%	
ROGUE OPS	Kemco	45	38%	
ROLLERCOASTER WORLD	Midas	47	50%	
ROMANCE OF THE THREE KINGS VIII	Koei	48	70%	
R: RACER EVOLUTION	NAMCO	45	37%	
RTX RED ROCK	LucasArts	38	55%	
RUGBY 2004	EA	40	81%	
RUMBLE RACING	EA	10	76%	
RUMBLE ROSES	Konami	59	69%	
RUNE: VIKING WARLORD	Take 2	13	56%	
RYGAR: THE LEGENDARY ADVENTURE	Tecmo	33	78%	
SAMURAI	Bam!	25	74%	
SAMURAI JACK: THE SHADOW OF AKU	Sega	51	59%	
SAMURAI WARRIORS	EA	52	80%	
SAMURAI WARRIORS: XTREME LEGENDS	Koei	59	66%	
SAVAGE SKIES	Big Ben	34	67%	
SCOOBY-DOO: NIGHT OF 100 FRIGHTS	THQ	25	64%	
SCOOBY DOO: MYSTERY MAYHEM	THQ	49	51%	
SCRABBLE 2003 EDITION	Ubisoft	40	64%	
SECOND SIGHT	**Codemasters**	**53**	**90%**	
Beautiful design and a truly novel take on the stealth genre. A must for anyone.				
SECRET WEAPONS OVER NORMANDY	LucasArts	45	76%	
SEEK & DESTROY	Play It	39	69%	
SEGA BASS FISHING DUEL	Acclaim	33	55%	
SEGA SUPERSTARS	Sega	56	80%	
SERIOUS SAM: NEXT ENCOUNTER	Take Two	49	74%	
SHADOW HEARTS: COVENANT	Midway	60	84%	
SHADOW MAN: 2ECOND COMING	Acclaim	20	68%	
SHADOW OF MEMORIES	Konami	06	80%	
SHADOW OF ROME	Capcom	58	85%	
SHARK TALE	Activision	55	29%	
SHELLSHOCK: NAM '67	Eidos	51	71%	
SHIFTERS	3DO	24	40%	
SHINOBI	EA	35	75%	
SHOX	EA	28	61%	
SHREK 2	Activision	51	78%	
SHREK SUPER PARTY	TDK Mediactive	33	58%	
SHOWDOWN: LEGENDS OF WRESTLING	Acclaim	50	72%	
SILENT HILL 2	Konami	15	88%	
SILENT HILL 3	Konami	36	87%	
SILENT HILL 4: THE ROOM	Konami	52	74%	
SILENT SCOPE 3	Konami	31	54%	
SILPHEED	Working Design	03	51%	
SIMPSONS HIT AND RUN	Vivendi	42	77%	
SIMPSONS ROAD RAGE, THE	EA	16	76%	
SIMS, THE	EA	31	85%	
SIMS: BUSTIN' OUT, THE	EA	44	79%	
SINGSTAR	**SCEE**	**49**	**90%**	
For people who don't like games. And for people who love games.				
SINGSTAR PARTY	Sony	55	85%	
SKY ODYSSEY	SCEE	08	79%	
SLAM TENNIS	Atari	25	77%	
SLED STORM	EA	21	76%	
SLY RACCOON	SCEE	31	80%	
SLY 2: BAND OF THIEVES	SONY	55	81%	
SMASH CARS	Metro 3D	39	54%	
SMASH COURT TENNIS: PRO TOURNAMENT 2	Sony	50	85%	
SMUGGLER'S RUN	Take 2	03	75%	
SMUGGLER'S RUN 2: HOSTILE TERRITORY	Take 2	17	77%	
SNK VS CAPCOM: SVC CHAOS	SNK	59	78%	
SOCOM: US NAVY SEALS	SCEA	30	82%	
SOCOM 2: US NAVY SEALS	**SCEE**	**44**	**90%**	
Immersive and dramatic – this game alone is worth hooking up to broadband.				
SOLDIER OF FORTUNE: GOLD EDITION	Codemasters	23	64%	
SONIC HEROES	Sega	46	66%	
SOS: THE FINAL ESCAPE	Agetec	33	81%	
SOUL CALIBUR 2	**Namco**	**40**	**93%**	
The very best fighter money can buy. Comes complete with old man Heihachi.				
SONIC MEGA COLLECTION PLUS	Sega	58	69%	
SOUL REAVER 2	Eidos	17	78%	
SPAWN ARMAGEDDON	EA	47	69%	
SPEED KINGS	Acclaim	37	55%	
SPHINX AND THE CURSED MUMMY	THQ	46	64%	
SPIDER-MAN: THE MOVIE	Activision	24	70%	

BRONZE AWARD: A very enjoyable and solid game scoring 70-79% | **SILVER AWARD:** A top-notch PS2 title that scored between 80-89% | **GOLD AWARD:** A game scoring 90% or more. An absolute classic.

RC SPORTS COPTER CHALLENGE	36%
RUNABOUT 3	22%
SCORPION KING, THE: RISE OF THE AKKADIAN	23%
SEGA SOCCER SLAM	36%
SEVEN SAMURAI 20XX	33%
SHADOW OF ZORRO	35%
SHAUN PALMER'S PRO SNOWBOARDER	35%
SIMPSONS SKATEBOARDING, THE	09%
SKY SURFER	29%
SPACE INVADERS: INVASION DAY	30%
SPEED CHALLENGE: JACQUES	
VILLENEUVE'S RACING VISION	23%

SUNNY GARCIA SURFING	
SUPERCAR STREET CHALLENGE	36%
SURFING H3O	
SVEN-GORAN ERIKSSON'S	
WORLD CUP CHALLENGE	
TETRIS WORLDS	32%
TERMINATOR 3: ROTM	
TOP ANGLER	
TWIN CALIBER	
WARRIORS OF MIGHT & MAGIC	
WDL WAR JETZ	29%
WHIRL TOUR	



TOP FIVE

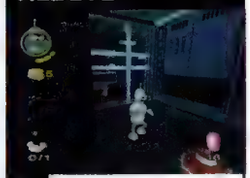
ALL TOO APT GAME TITLES

1. A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
2. BAD BOYS
3. CRASH 'N' BURN
4. BLOWOUT
5. ENDGAME

SUSPICIOUSLY CAMP MEN

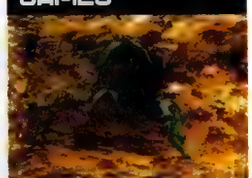
1. DANTE (DEVIL MAY CRY)
2. OCTAVIUS (SHADOW OF ROME)
3. RAIDEN (METAL GEAR SOLID 2)
4. SMITHERS (SIMPSONS: HIT & RUN)
5. RAPHAEL (SOUL CALIBUR II)

ROBOTS



1. BENDER (FUTURAMA)
2. CLANK (RATCHET AND CLANK)
3. JEHUTY (ZOE 2)
4. RIDEPOD (DARK CHRONICLE)
5. R-109 (TIMESPLITTERS 2)

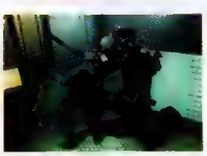
STEALTH GAMES



1. METAL GEAR SOLID 3
2. SPLINTER CELL: CHAOS THEORY
3. MANHUNT
4. HITMAN: CONTRACTS
5. ALIAS

GAME NAME	PUBLISHER	ISSUE	SCORE	AWARD
SPIDER-MAN 2	**Activision**	**51**	**92%**	
Best movie license ever. Best superhero game ever. Best GTA clone. Enough said.				
SPLASHDOWN	Atari	16	75%	
SPLASHDOWN 2: RIDERS GONE WILD	THQ	40	75%	
SPLINTER CELL	**Ubisoft**	**34**	**91%**	
The ultimate 'boys with toys' action adventure that's full of surprises.				
SPLINTER CELL: CHAOS THEORY	Ubisoft	61	88%	
SPLINTER CELL: PANDORA TOMORROW	Ubisoft	51	88%	
SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS MOVIE, THE	THQ	59	43%	
SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS: MOVIN' WITH FRIENDS	THQ	58	29%	
SPY FICTION	Sammy	54	75%	
SPY HUNTER 2	Midway	46	67%	
SPY VS. SPY	Take Two	61	32%	
SPYRO: ENTER THE DRAGONFLY	Universal	30	68%	
SSX TRICKY	**EA**	**16**	**95%**	
Edgy, funky, cool – compulsive gameplay with riotous effects equals pure fun.				
SSX3	**EA**	**41**	**94%**	
One of the few games to make you feel good about life. Responsive and thrilling.				
STAR OCEAN 3	Ubisoft	55	85%	
STARSKY & HUTCH	Empire	38	77%	
STAR TREK VOYAGER: ELITE FORCE	Codemasters	23	75%	
STAR WARS: BATTLEFRONT	Activision	54	77%	
STAR WARS: BOUNTY HUNTER	Activision	31	62%	
STAR WARS: JEDI STARFIGHTER	Activision	22	80%	
STAR WARS: STARFIGHTER	Activision	09	85%	
STAR WARS: THE CLONE WARS	Activision	33	69%	
STATE OF EMERGENCY	Take 2	20	75%	
STREET FIGHTER EX3	Capcom	05	79%	
STREET HOOPS	Activision	28	64%	
STUNT GP	Titus	16	38%	
STUNTMAN	Atari	26	74%	
SUFFERING, THE	Midway	48	86%	
SUIKODEN 3	Konami	39	66%	
SUMMER HEAT BEACH VOLLEYBALL	Acclaim	39	56%	
SUMMONER	THQ	07	70%	
SUMMONER 2	THQ	29	73%	
SUM OF ALL FEARS, THE	Ubisoft	29	57%	
SUPER BUST-A-MOVE	Acclaim	04	78%	
SUPERFARM	Ignition	42	60%	
SUPERMAN: SHADOW OF APOKOLIPS	Atari	29	48%	
SUPER TRUCKS	Jester	22	45%	
SWAT GLOBAL STRIKE TEAM	Vivendi	42	82%	
SWING AWAY GOLF	EA	05	70%	
SX SUPERSTAR	Acclaim	38	53%	
SYPHON FILTER: THE OMEGA STRAIN	SCEA	50	75%	
TAK AND THE POWER OF JUJU	THQ	47	70%	
TAZ: WANTED	Atari	28	70%	
TD OVERDRIVE	Atari	23	64%	
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES	Konami	47	56%	
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES 2: BATTLE NEXUS	Konami	58	23%	
TEKKEN 4	**SCEE**	**27**	**90%**	
Way more of everything than the stopgap Tournament title. Brilliant.				
TEKKEN 5	**Sony Namco**	**61**	**91%**	
And even better again – the ultimate *Tekken*.				
TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT	SCEE	04	87%	
TENCHU: WRATH OF HEAVEN	Activision	34	70%	
TERMINATOR: DAWN OF FATE	Atari	28	49%	
TERMINATOR 3: REDEMPTION	Atari	55	66%	
TEST DRIVE: OFFROAD WIDE OPEN	Atari	16	44%	
THEME PARK WORLD	EA	05	68%	
THING, THE	Vivendi	27	83%	
THIS IS FOOTBALL 2004	Sony	47	75%	
THIS IS FOOTBALL 2005	Sony	56	68%	
THUNDERHAWK: OPERATION PHOENIX	Eidos	14	70%	
TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2004	EA	40	81%	
TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2005	EA	544	82%	
TIME CRISIS 2	Sony	16	78%	
TIMESPLITTERS 2	**EIDOS**	**28**	**95%**	
Stunning multiplayer action PLUS a massive, varied single-player mode too.				
TIMESPLITTERS 3: FUTURE PERFECT	**EA**	**59**	**90%**	
Given the EA spit and polish, but now rather more soulless than before. Still superb, though.				
TOCA RACE DRIVER	Codemasters	26	82%	
TOCA RACE DRIVER 2	**Codemasters**	**54**	**90%**	
Tracks, cars and – vitally – racing are all super.				
TOKYO ROAD RACE	Midas	36	45%	
TOMB RAIDER: THE ANGEL OF DARKNESS	Eidos	38	58%	
TONY HAWKS UNDERGROUND 2	Eidos	55	89%	
TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4	**Activision**	**30**	**94%**	
Despite not having the impact of THPS3, we suggest you get this version first.				
TOP GEAR DARE DEVIL	Planet	04	62%	
TOP GUN: COMBAT ZONE	Virgin	16	67%	
TOTAL CLUB MANAGER 2005	EA	56	56%	
TOTAL IMMERSION RACING	Empire	31	74%	
TRANSFORMERS	Atari	49	84%	
TRANSWORLD SURF	Atari	26	72%	
TREASURE PLANET	Sony	29	75%	
TRIBES: AERIAL ASSAULT	Vivendi	37	74%	
TRUE CRIME	Activision	43	74%	
TUROK EVOLUTION	Acclaim	27	71%	
TWISTED METAL: BLACK	Sony	13	80%	
TY THE TASMANIAN TIGER 2	EA	55	38%	
U MOVE SUPER SPORTS	Konami	57	63%	
UEFA CHALLENGE	Atari	12	56%	

GAME NAME	PUBLISHER	ISSUE	SCORE	AWARD
UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE 2001-2002	Take Two	18	48%	
UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE 2004-2005	EA	59	62%	
UEFA EURO 2004	EA	49	70%	
UFC: SUDDEN IMPACT	Take 2	51	70%	
UFC: THROWDOWN	Ubisoft	27	75%	
UNDER THE SKIN	Capcom	58	70%	
UNLIMITED SAGA	Atari	42	41%	
UNREAL TOURNAMENT	Atari	07	82%	
URBAN FREESTYLE SOCCER	Acclaim	45	72%	
URBZ – SIMS IN THE CITY, THE	EA	56	50%	
USA RACER	Davilex	36	37%	
VAMPIRE NIGHTS	SCEE	21	59%	
VAN HELSING	VU Games	49	67%	
VEXX	Acclaim	34	73%	
VIB RIPPLE	Sony	52	58%	
VICTORIOUS BOXERS	Empire	14	80%	
VIETCONG: PURPLE HAZE	Gathering	54	71%	
VIEWTIFUL JOE	Capcom	54	88%	
VIEWTIFUL JOE 2	Capcom	58	85%	
VIRTUA FIGHTER 4 EVOLUTION	Sega	36	87%	
VIRTUAL-ON: MARZ	Sega	39	56%	
VIRTUA TENNIS 2	Acclaim	30	88%	
V-RALLY 3	Atari	24	81%	
WACKY RACES	Atari	11	63%	
WAKEBOARDING UNLEASHED: FT. SHAUN MURRAY	Activision	37	65%	
WALLACE AND GROMIT IN PROJECT ZOO	Bam!	41	69%	
WARHAMMER 40,000: FIRE WARRIOR	THQ	40	65%	
WAR OF THE MONSTERS	SCEE	34	69%	
WAY OF THE SAMURAI	Capcom	50	80%	
WDL THUNDER TANKS	3DO	06	69%	
WHIPLASH	Eidos	46	72%	
WHITEOUT	Konami	44	45%	
WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE 2	Eidos	17	53%	
WILD ARMS 3	Ubisoft	33	71%	
WILD WILD RACING	Rage	03	71%	
WINNING ELEVEN 7 INTERNATIONAL	Konami	50	89%	
WINNING ELEVEN 8	**Konami**	**53**	**92%**	
A digital depiction of footballing brilliance second to none.				
WIPEOUT FUSION	Sony	19	73%	
WOODY WOODPECKER: ESC. FROM BUZZ BUZZARD'S PK	Cryo	30	49%	
WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SNOOKER 2004	Codemasters	51	80%	
WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP RUGBY	Acclaim	48	55%	
WORLD WAR ZERO: IRONSTORM	MC2	48	77%	
WORMS 3D	Sega	42	80%	
WORMS: FORTS	Atari	55	54%	
WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP 4	SCEE	55	87%	
WORLD SNOOKER CHAMPIONSHIP 2005	Sega	61	68%	
WRECKLESS: THE YAKUZA MISSIONS	Activision	30	38%	
WWE CRUSH HOUR	THQ	37	49%	
WWE SMACKDOWN! SHUT YOUR MOUTH	THQ	29	82%	
WWE SMACKDOWN! VS. RAW	THQ	56	85%	
WWF SMACKDOWN! JUST BRING IT	THQ	16	80%	
XGRA: EXTREME G	Acclaim	40	75%	
X-MEN LEGENDS	Activision	55	69%	
X-MEN: NEXT DIMENSION	Activision	31	67%	
X-MEN: WOLVERINE'S REVENGE	Activision	36	75%	
X SQUAD	EA	06	59%	
YU-GI-OH!: DUELLISTS OF THE ROSES	Konami	41	62%	
ZOE 2: THE 2ND RUNNER	Konami	35	79%	



■ **BRONZE AWARD:** A very enjoyable and solid game scoring 70-79%

■ **SILVER AWARD:** A top-notch PS2 title that scored between 80-89%

■ **GOLD AWARD:** A game scoring 90% or more. An absolute classic.

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19TH JUNE 2005

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PS3

"THE FORUM HAS GONE MENTAL"

"IT REALLY, REALLY DOES LOOK REAL. LIKE REALLY" Gamesfilter

"THE BEST OF ITS KIND SO FAR" Spong

"Faked PS3 Image Causes Stir" Eurogamer

"NO F**K WAY! IT'S TERRIBLE" Gamesradar

"FAIRLY CONVINCING" C&VG

HOW TO ~~MAKE~~ FAKE A PS3

Our artist's impression of PS3 wasn't meant to deceive people but to spark a lively debate about what we'll *actually* see in Sony's new console. Well, that was the plan – 17 hours later our PS3 render was at the centre of a furious global debate. Here's how and why we made it – plus concrete details on PS3 and *official* confirmation of when we'll see the real thing...

"Hello, I'm PSM2's Art Editor Milford Coppock, the bloke who designed this PS3. I'm here to explain why I made our PS3 look like a video projector. And not, sadly, how I use the power of positive thought to keep my busy hands soft like pillows."

1) WIRELESS JOYPADS

"Why will it have wireless joypads? Xbox 2 (or Xenon, or Xbox 360 or whatever) will have wireless pads, so you can bet PS3 will too."

2) BLU RAY DISK DRIVE

"This has already been confirmed, but we're not sure if the disks will come 'naked' or in protective cases like UMDs."

3) MEMORY STICK DUO

"So you can transfer data from your PS3 to your PSP – Sony don't want to give up the memory stick format, however unpopular."

4) UMD DRIVE

"We doubt there'll *really* be a recordable UMD drive, but imagine being able to download games/music/movies over broadband and transfer them into a portable format – as a design facet, it's more symbolic than practical."

5) MEMORY CARD

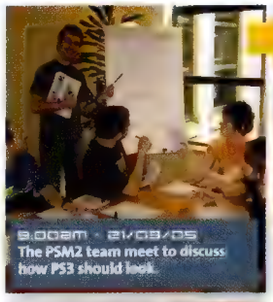
"Surely Sony won't stop people from playing their old PS2 games, will they?"

6) THE COLOUR

"It looks like Xbox 2 is going to be iPod white, so Sony may opt for gloss black as an act of sheer contrariness. That's just a *may*, mind you.

7) THE SHAPE

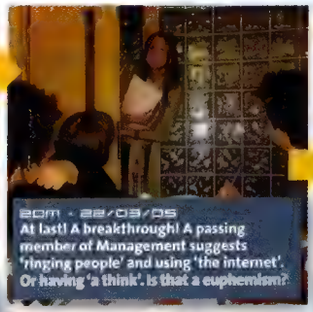
I looked at branded elements of PSP, like the silver circle motif, and incorporated them into the design of Sony's lifestyle products, like their home projector and so on.



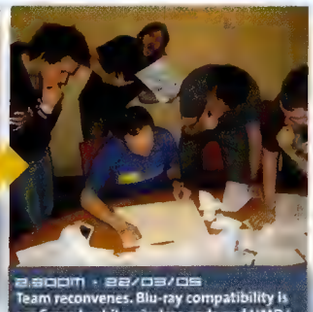
9.00am · 21/03/05
The PSM2 team meet to discuss how PS3 should look.

10.00am · 21/03/05

11.00am · 22/03/05
"Anyone else?"



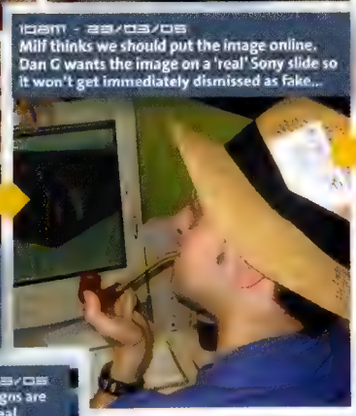
2pm · 22/03/05
At last! A breakthrough! A passing member of Management suggests 'ringing people' and using 'the internet'. Or having 'a think'. Is that a euphemism?



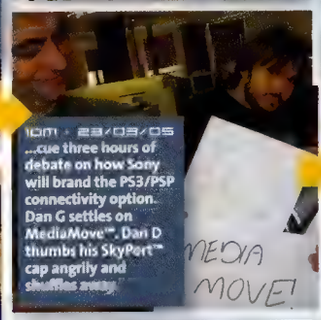
2.30pm · 22/03/05
Team reconvenes. Blu-ray compatibility is confirmed, while wireless pads and UMD/PSP compatibility look certain.
A recordable UMD drive is in, to provoke debate about the machine's potential.

4pm · 22/03/05
Milf sits down to sketch our PS3. This is the feller whose fake PS3 logo (see PSM2#34) was used as an official one in a press conference by a Dutch hardware firm, while Sony nicked his 'mood board' idea for their PSP unveiling. He's a genius. On the flip side, Milf never smiles and is 15 minutes late every day.

5:00pm · 22/03/05
Milf renders the PS3 – using magic he describes as "Cinema4D design software". The rest of the team are given crayons to play with.

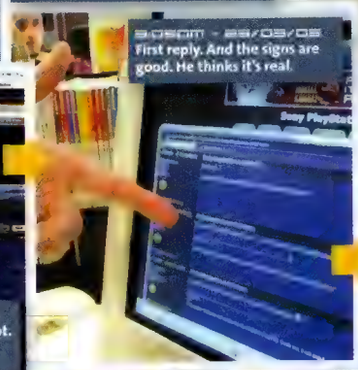


10am · 23/03/05
Milf thinks we should put the image online. Dan G wants the image on a 'real' Sony slide so it won't get immediately dismissed as fake...

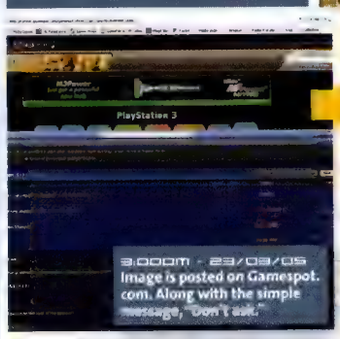


10am · 23/03/05
...cue three hours of debate on how Sony will brand the PS3/PSP connectivity option. Dan G settles on MediaMove™. Dan D thumbs his SkyPort™ cap angrily and shuffles away.

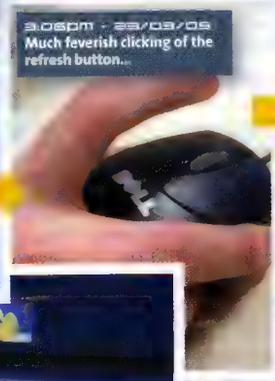
2.00pm · 23/03/05
Milf completes the image and saves it as a .PDF file. It's time to put it online using a technical-sounding email pseudonym as a disguise. And not KenKutaragi@sony.com as is suggested.



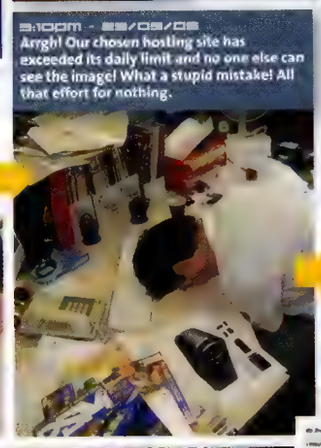
3.05pm · 23/03/05
First reply. And the signs are good. He thinks it's real.



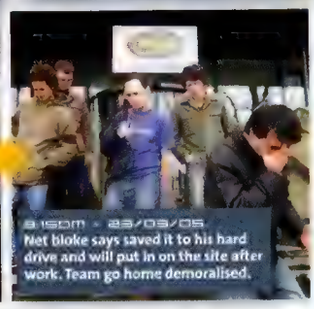
3.00pm · 23/03/05
Image is posted on Gamespot.com. Along with the simple message, "Don't ask."



3.06pm · 23/03/05
Much feverish clicking of the refresh button...

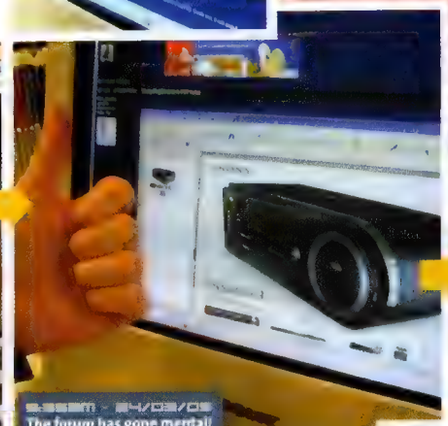


3:10pm · 23/03/05
Arrgh! Our chosen hosting site has exceeded its daily limit and no one else can see the image! What a stupid mistake! All that effort for nothing.

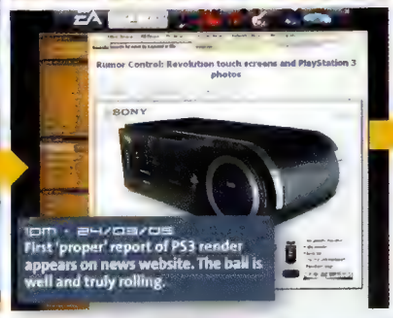


8.15pm · 23/03/05
Net bloke says saved it to his hard drive and will put in on the site after work. Team go home demoralised.

9.00am · 24/03/05
Need okay...



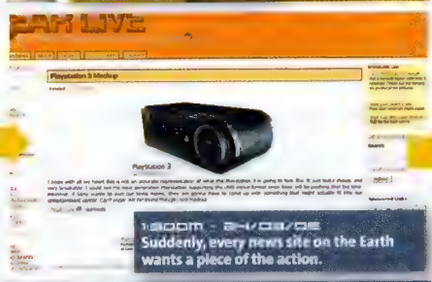
9.55am · 24/03/05
The forum has gone mental!



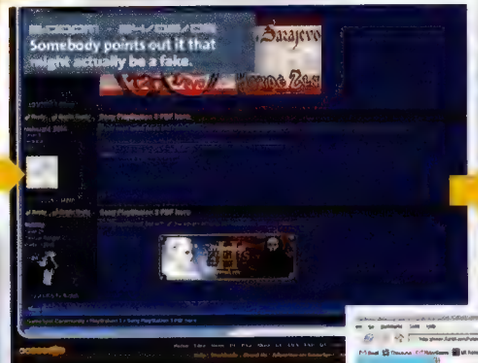
1pm · 24/03/05
First 'proper' report of PS3 render appears on news website. The ball is well and truly rolling.

1:00pm · 24/03/05
Another website follows.

1:00pm · 24/03/05
And another...

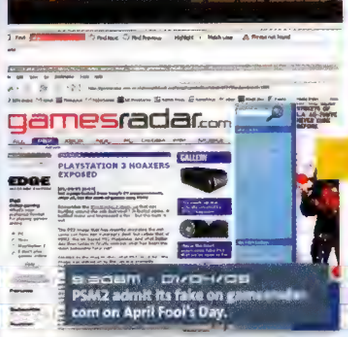


1:00pm · 24/03/05
Suddenly, every news site on the Earth wants a piece of the action.



8:00am · 24/03/05
Somebody points out it that might actually be a fake.

8:10pm · 24/03/05
Somebody scientifically proves that it's a fake.



9.20am · 01/04/05
PSM2 admit its fake on gamesradar.com on April Fool's Day.

9.31am · 01/04/05
Internet resumes its normal duties of robotically sending emails made up of random words, trying to sell chap-stiffening drugs and distributing fuzzy videos of Britney Spears sweating on a pedalo filmed from inside a bush, on a mobile phone. THE END.

WHAT WE DID RIGHT!

1) We copied the design of Sony's official PSP presentation in order to make it look like it could have actually come from Sony. The use of accurate logos and 'TM's throughout helped things along.
2) By placing the image on a slide labelled 12/18 it looked as though it was originally part of a much bigger presentation.
3) The shiny casing was rendered with a real photo reflected in it – making it look more real. Of course it's still a render, but this was the same technique used on the first real PSP renders.
4) We coined lots of ridiculous Sony-sounding cod phrases such as MediaMove™ for the PS3/PSP connectivity feature.
5) We put the pic on an ftp host with a 10Mb per day download limit. This meant that only 10 people could download the original file each day (it was about 1Mb in size, see). This meant that the link quickly went 'dead' causing people to assume that Sony had pulled the image.

WHAT WE DID WRONG...

1) OK, the Memory Card and Blu Ray disc slots are slightly out of proportion.
2) The power and wireless lights are too garish. And – given that they're buttons too – miles too small.
3) The light source texture we used was part of an established 3D image library that 3D modelling experts were *actually able to recognise*!
4) We included a recordable UMD drive to get people talking, all the while certain that there was no way Sony would really put one in PS3.
5) On the top-down view one end is slightly fatter than the other. Doh.

PS3

"HIGHLY POLISHED PIANO-BLACK"

CONFIRMED!

CLEAR YOUR SCHEDULE. MAKE A NOTE IN YOUR DIARY. THIS IS THE DAY THE WORLD MEETS PS3!

16TH MAY 2005 – 11PM UK

Look at the picture. Just look at it. For us, it's like Booby Moore lifting the World Cup and the moment PSM2 lives for – the bit at the Sony pre-E3 conference every year where boss man Kaz Hirai, or his pal Ken Kuturagi, holds aloft a new piece of hardware for the first time.

We've had online adapters, hard drives, PSPs and now – after years of teasing details – the PS3, confirmed for its global debut on Monday, May 16th at 3pm US time (ie, 11pm UK time). We'll be there – after scrapping to secure the hotly sought tickets – and drinking in every single second of our first glimpse of PS3 as thirstily as a man served a pint of beer after a week in the Sahara. Yes, it's *only* a console. But... well, you wait. When Ken's waving the PS3 around like a top hat – oh, he will – and rapping about *GTA: Europe* with Rockstar's Dan Houser

"EXPECT A SNEAK PEEK OF METAL GEAR SOLID 4 ON PLAYSTATION 3"

before Kojima parachutes in with the first video of *MGS4*, there won't be a glum face in the house. Perhaps. That's it, for now but in PSM2#63 on sale 2nd of June we'll have an exclusive report of *that* moment. Until then, gorge on the confirmed PS3 details below...

So 16th May seems deffo, but Sony and Microsoft are so obsessed with revealing their next-generation consoles first, that Sony *may* move this PS3 debut date forward to beat the Xbox 2 announcement on MTV America scheduled for Sunday at 9.30pm EST. Truth is, Sony can win the PR war either way – even if they do 'reveal' second, their machine is purportedly much more powerful. 'Xbox went early because they were scared' is the get-out clause. Still, forget Microsoft, we're more concerned with Sony delivering on their promises with PS3. The rivalry ensures they daren't drop the ball – so expect a number of big PS3 game demos and, if our sources don't lie, that sneak glimpse on *Metal Gear Solid 4* on PS3. For our money, PS3 gets revealed on May 16th as planned and they'll have signed one huge exclusivity deal – *Grand Theft Auto 4*? – too. So despite a strong showing for Bill Gates' new console, Sony will edge it. Partisan? Us? Never.

THERE'S ONE I DID EARLIER:

(HOW MILF DUPED THE WORLD)

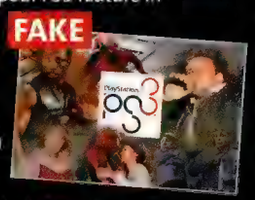
This isn't the first time PSM2 has sparked off a PS3-based frenzy. Who could forget...?

1) THAT PS3 LOGO!

Milf knocked up a curly PS3 logo for a spoof feature in PSM2#34. The logo was promptly 'borrowed' by RAM chip developers Rambus – official RAM suppliers for PS3's Nvidia graphics chip – during a press conference. Japanese RAM supplier Elpida also used the logo sparking speculation that 'it must be real'. Nope.

2) THE BEDINGFIELD MOOD BOARD!

To supplement our spoof PS3 feature in PSM2#34, we knocked up a 'mood board' featuring Spider Man, Milla Jovovich and – in a fairly clear indication this wasn't real – Daniel Bedingfield. Yes, the idea was rubbish, but our laughter turned to silence when weeks later we copped eyes on Sony's *official* REAL PSP mood board – featuring Spider Man, *Gran Turismo* and – yes – Stuart Little. Bedingfield just hasn't been the same since.



3) THE PS3 TOASTER!

Some folk honestly thought this was 'real' – i.e. that we actually imagined PS3 would look like a kitchen appliance. Others complained that it 'looked rubbish' and that 'they'd never buy it'. In our defence, we'd left a tiny clue that that our PS3 was intended as a spoof – *it was the shape of a toaster*. A TOASTER! It even had a handle for browning the disks. And somewhere in the text we said that "Sony accidentally posted us the image with a copy of *War of the Monsters*" and that "if you leave PS3 alone for too long you'll hear muffled sobs... and the transparent LCD mood-o-meter at the front goes puffy-white like ET when he falls into the canal". So that's that then, eh? Not quite. "I'm not buying a machine that cries – it sounds gay," growled one chap so heterosexually that he might as well have been carrying four pint glasses across a busy street on the way back from the rugby club before teaching his wife to reverse park.

PS3 FACTS

The rumours, speculation and frankly made-up stuff end here. Here's the latest potted PS3 fact.

1 It will be powered by IBM's Cell chip, a 64bit processor that can theoretically be linked with other Cell chips to share power and run even faster – hence all those mental rumours about PS3 'talking' with other Cell-chip powered home electronics devices like your toaster. Cell runs at 4Ghz, faster than the fastest Intel PC chip. For the record, PS2's processor runs at 300Mhz – so at 4000Mhz (since 1Ghz = 1000Mhz), PS3 is over 13 times faster. It's not just about processor speed, but a useful indication of the technical leap

2 PS3 will use Nvidia's next-generation GeForce graphics chips. Que? It's an improved version of the chip used to power sexy-looking games like *Doom 3* on high end PCs. Result: PS3 games will look better than cutting-edge PC games. In fact, given the leap from PSone to PS2, where PS2's in-game graphics advanced to the same quality as PSone cut-scenes, perhaps we can dream that PS3's in-game graphics will be as good as the cut-scenes from PS2's astonishing *Onimusha 3*. It's not directly comparable, given that in-game animation needs to instantly reflect split-second user commands (creating a trade off between fluidity and response), but the character models should be just as good.

3 Dev kits are already in the hands of selected UK developers (a fiver says this includes tech-experts Criterion – who designed the Renderware middleware software used by games like *GTA3* and *Tony Hawk's 3*) and reports indicate that PS3 will be 'noticeably superior' to Xbox 2. "The rumours are that PlayStation 3 will have a little more under the hood than Xbox 2," suggests EA Producer Rory Armes in a recent interview with BBC News, "We know maybe what PS3 will do, but we can only guess. Microsoft is obviously a software company first and foremost, while Sony has more experience in hardware. I think Sony will be able to push a little more into a box at cost."

INTERNET-HEADS SPEAK!

Here, picked out from thousands, are just a few of the comments our PS3 garnered from our virtual web friends.

FROM GAMESRADAR...

"Given all the possible atrocities of design that Sony could use, I'd settle for that one right now." LongislandShu

"It's certainly the most convincing one we've seen so far, but, I have a few issues with how genuine it is... 1) Blue Ray Disks come in cases like Mini Disks. 2) Why is the reflection a train station? Couldn't the 3D artist find a better image? 3) It looks like a projector." Bigbrave

"Grrr .. of course it's fake! Nobody ever said it was real! Can everyone stop trying to act artificially knowledgeable and stop stating the obvious. Yes. It's fake. Now discuss the design or move on." Andross

"I think it's ugly, but pretty *because* it's ugly. Like an ugly child you can't but help feeling sorry for. I wouldn't mind if Sony did make the PS3 look like this – it'd be a change from the usual boxiness of consoles." Gwidan

MEANWHILE ON GAMESPOT...

"Hmmm...very hard to tell if it's fake or not."

"UGLY HELLYA HELL YEAH."

"It wouldn't be Sony's style to make a console that looks this way."

"Jeesh, of course it's fake."

AND OVER AT TEAMXBOX...

"If it's a fake it's a good one – little details like the "E3 2005" and "Page 12/18" help sell it as authentic." Kurgan

"I dont care how it looks, you geeks need to spend more time with your girlfriends!" Twila

AND ON GAMESFILTER...

"A high quality PDF of the console shots of what is purportedly PlayStation 3 has hit the web, and in this guise looks incredibly authentic."
News story on March 24th before we admit it's fake

"We thought your pretty console picture was ace. Half the planet believed you for a bit, which makes you an honorary internet underground person, as opposed to someone wasting their lives believing there's a future in games mags."
News story on April 25th after we admit it's fake

Ringtoneking

from as low as 30p* in the mobile Ringtoneking clubs

see details below

Charts

	poly	mono
1 Tony Christie - To Amarillo	Rin3965	Rin3975
2 50 Cent Ft. Olvia - Candy Shop	Rin3966	Rin3976
3 Elvis Presley - Devil In Disguise	Rin3967	Rin3977
4 Mario - Let Me Love You	Rin3968	Rin3978
5 Mariah Carey - It's Like That	Rin3969	Rin3979
6 T. Killers - Somebody Told Me	Rin3970	Rin3980
7 Twista - Hope	Rin3971	Rin3981
8 Kylie Minogue - Giving You Up	Rin3972	Rin3982
9 McFly - All About You	Rin3973	Rin3983
10 Nelly - Over And Over	Rin3974	Rin3984

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Ringtones

	poly	mono
Akon - Locked Up	Rin3985	Rin3997
Basement J. - Oh My Gosh	Rin3986	Rin3998
Eminem - Like Toy Soldiers	Rin3987	Rin3999
Gwen Stefani - Rich Girl	Rin3988	Rin4000
Jem - They	Rin3989	Rin4001
Jennifer Lopez - Get Right	Rin3990	Rin4002
Lemar - Time To Grow	Rin3991	Rin4003
Morrissey - There Is A Light	Rin3992	Rin4004
Natalie Imbruglia - Shiver	Rin3993	Rin4005
Sunset Strip. - Falling Stars	Rin3994	Rin4006
Faders - No Sleep Tonight	Rin3995	Rin4007
The Game - How We Do	Rin3996	Rin4008

Realtone Charts

1) Tony Christie - Amarillo	Act385
2) Mario - Let Me Love You	Act386
3) Jennifer Lopez - Get Right	Act387
4) Scissor S. - Filthy Gorgeous	Act388
5) Ciara & Missy Elliot - 1, 2 Step	Act389
6) Lemar - Time To Grow	Act390
7) 3 Lions - Football's Coming Home	Act391
8) Green Day - American Idiot	Act392
9) S.Strippers - Falling Stars	Act393
10) U. Nations - Out Of Touch	Act394
11) Eric Prydz - Call On Me	Act395
12) Jay-Z/L.Park - Numb/Encore	Act396
13) Usher - Caught Up	Act397

Sound Effects

Ali G**	Go6185	Get Up, Wake Up !	Go6204
Anne & The Ducks	Go6186	Get Your Money	Go6205
Avid Merrion**	Go6187	Happy Celebration	Go6206
Better Pick Up Or...	Go6188	Hey You!	Go6207
Call In The Oven	Go6189	I Have The Power	Go6208
Crazy Frog - Funky	Go6190	Insulting Phone	Go6209
Crazy F. - Psycho	Go6191	KungFu Crab	Go6210
Crazy F. - Teasing	Go6192	Laughing Mobile	Go6211
Crazy F. (Original)	Go6193	Lou & Andy**	Go6212
Crazy F. Is Excited	Go6194	Martians	Go6213
Crazy Frog Is High	Go6195	MelB (Bo Selecta)**	Go6214
Crazy Frog Is Nuts	Go6196	Mind The Mobile	Go6215
Crazy F. Is Puking	Go6197	Old Teleph. Ringing	Go6216
Daffyd** - Only Gay	Go6198	Penguins In Trouble	Go6217
Del Boy**	Go6199	Peter Kay**	Go6218
Emily Howard**	Go6200	Processing	Go6219
Formula-1 Racing Car	Go6201	Sweet Little Yellow	Go6220
Frog In A Blender	Go6202	U Have A Phone Call	Go6221
Get Da Fone...	Go6203	Vicky Pollard**	Go6222

**Celeb sound effects are performed by voice artists.

Sweety

Theme

New7241

Sweet Wallpapers

New7210 New7211 New7212 New7213

Video

New7242

New7214 New7215 New7216 New7217

Game

New7243

Ringtones

	poly	mono	real
Tweet Tweet Original	New7218	New7219	New7220
Tweet Tweet Reamix	New7221	New7222	New7223
Twinkle Twinkle	New7224	New7225	New7226
Little Birds Rock	New7227	New7228	New7229

Videoringtone

New7240

Animated Screensavers

New7205

Sound Effects

I May Be Small...	New7230
Sweety Goes Crazy	New7231
Tweet Tweet	New7232
Please Pick Up The Phone	New7233
Your Phone Is Ringing	New7234
Hi Sweety ! Love You	New7235
Ringtone Song	New7236
Sweety Is Stressed	New7237
Tweet Tweet, Telephone	New7238
Tweet Tweet, Text Message	New7239

New7206 New7207 New7208 New7209

Top Wallpapers

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Animated Screensavers

Img5990 Img5991 Img5992 Img5993 Img5994 Img5995 Img5996

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For IRELAND txt 57113

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Action1911 — You are the commander of the sea fleet and your objective is to destroy the entire enemy fleet.

Action1912 — Bobby is back again! He must go to winterland to rescue his best friend and you must help him.

Action1913 — It's sheep shearing time! Help sheepfarmer Cal push his sheep through more than 50 levels.

Action1914 — It's the year 2029 and machines rule the world. Save the future in a dozen different missions.

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QUICK TIP: MX VS ATV UNLEASHED – TO UNLOCK EVERYTHING TYPE IN 'TOOLAZY' AS A PASSWORD.

Pro-

TRAINING YOU IN THE DARK ARTS OF PS2

99

'SPLITTERS: FUTURE PERFECT

Cortez causing you grief? We've all sorts of advice that'll make your future as perfect as it could possibly be.

102

DEVIL MAY CRY 3

There's loads of handy hints below, but if you want to know how to take out those goddamn evil bosses, page 96 is the place to be.

108

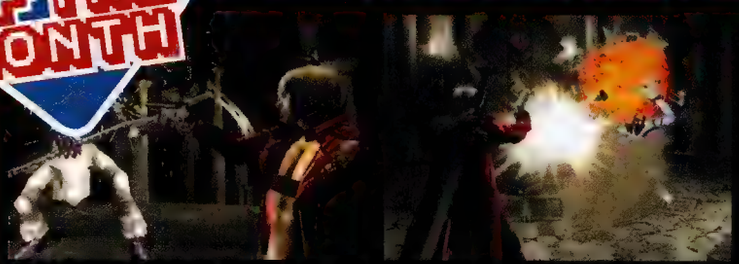
PRO DOJO

The dojo is the YMCA of the gaming world. On these pages, you can compare high scores with all the boys. Girls never send any scores, sadly. C'mon, ladies – get on it!

Don't tip waiters with cash – hand 'em these pages instead. It's much cheaper.

TIP OF THE MONTH

NOT GOT TIME FOR A DELICIOUS SLICE OF PIZZA DUE TO RELENTLESS ZOMBIE ATTACK? TELL US ABOUT IT...



DEVIL MAY CRY 3: DANTE'S AWAKENING

CHEAT MODE
At the starting menu, hold L1+ L2+ R1 + R2 and rotate the Left Analog-stick until "Devil May Cry!" is spoken. This will unlock all bonus modes, alternate costumes, and gallery entries. Press L1 or R1 at the mission selection screen to choose the new costume.

EASY MODE
Simply die twice while playing on Normal mode to unlock Easy mode.

ATTACK LOADING SCREEN
When loading, you can press either △ or ○ to slash or shoot respectively at the "NOW LOADING" message.

BREAK LOADING SCREEN
If you hit the "LOADING" word long enough by pressing △, it will break and a new one will appear.

ALTERNATE COSTUMES
Successfully complete the game on the easy or higher difficulty setting to unlock shirtless Dante, on the normal or higher difficulty setting to unlock the original *Devil May Cry* Dante, and on the hard difficulty setting to unlock the shirtless original *Devil May Cry* Dante. Press L1 or R1 at the mission selection screen to choose the new costume.

GALLERY
Successfully complete the game on the easy or higher difficulty setting to unlock gallery entries. Note: Higher difficulty settings will unlock additional selections.

HARD MODE
Successfully complete the game on the normal difficulty setting to unlock the hard difficulty setting.

DANTE MUST DIE MODE
Successfully complete the game on the hard difficulty setting to unlock Dante Must Die mode.

HEAVEN OR HELL MODE
Successfully complete Dante Must Die mode to unlock Heaven or Hell mode.

PLAY AS LEGENDARY DARK KNIGHT/SPARDA
Successfully complete the game on the hard difficulty setting to unlock Legendary Dark Knight/Sparda.

UNLIMITED DEVIL TRIGGER
Successfully complete Dante Must Die mode to unlock Unlimited Devil Trigger.

ALTERNATE ENDING SEQUENCE
During the credits, kill at least 100 opponents.

GAMEPLAY TIPS

■ Rebellion is a very good friend indeed. Don't simply cast it aside in favour of focusing around Cerberus, exciting as the prospect of actually using those tantalizing dealers of icy death may be to you. Though it tends towards being fairly direct in its approach, it does an absolutely superb job. It has a launching move that is only matched by one other in the game, the launcher of Agni and Rudra. A Rising High Time into an Aerial Rave is a great way to keep an enemy out of the fray, deal some pretty good damage, keep yourself out of the fray, and get up from Alright.

■ Cerberus is primarily useful on the weapon switch for two reasons. The first is simply jamming on △. It has an extremely fast combo that paralyzes most enemies and skyrockets the style rank. Switch over to Cerberus and deal damage to your enemies, then switch back to Rebellion and get into the air with a Rising High Time.

■ The other reason is Crystal Million Carat, a level two Swordmaster move and Crazy Combo. Once you get used to the timing needed for a Crystal and Million Carat combination, you'll start to realize the power. This combination will instantly kill a Hell Pride, seriously damage the vast majority of enemies, and send entire groups sprawling. In addition to the fearsome damage and crowd control power, it gets another crowd control boost in the form of a knockback effect.

■ Million Stab isn't actually quite as useful as it is in the demo, but it's still a very good move indeed. Hit more than one enemy with it and you're guaranteed a pretty good style rank and some serious damage to those pesky enemies.

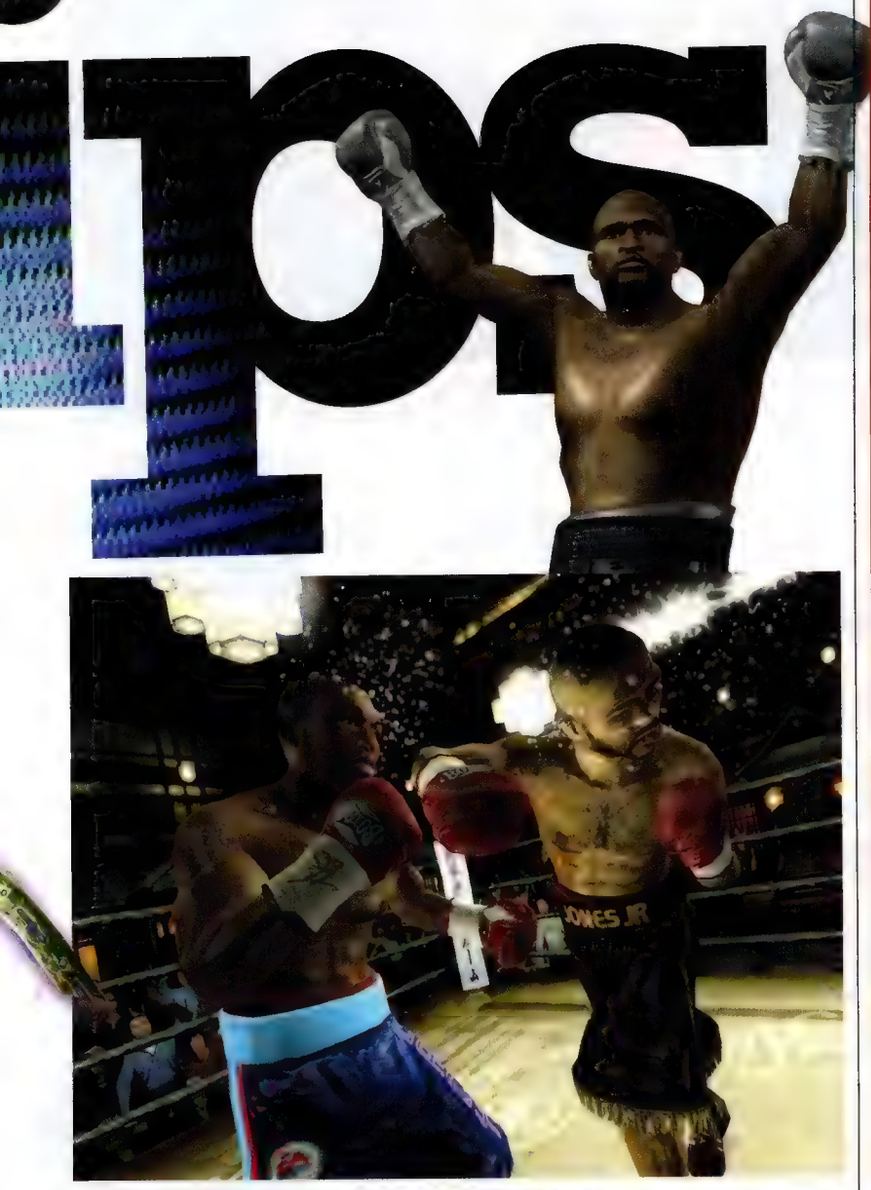
■ Never discount the regular combos, particularly with Rebellion. Alternating between the two normal combinations (△, △, △ and △, pause, △, △) will actually boost your style rank for a few rounds, although you will eventually need to start incorporating more moves into Dante's fearsome arsenal.

■ Don't be too hasty to throw away old weapons when you find new ones. You'll always encounter a Combat Adjudicator set to the new weapon soon after receiving it, but keep in mind that weapons become more useful when you have experience with them. After you get Agni and Rudra, for example, keep using Cerberus for a while. When you decide to try out Agni and Rudra, go train with them for a while. Get used to performing their moves. After you're used to their moves and have a feel for the style needed when playing with them, then consider which weapon to use. Always remember to mix up weapon combinations in search of better ones. You'll thank yourself for doing so.

■ Remember to focus on dodging attacks. All of the offensive power in the world won't save you if you don't know what to do when you hear an off-screen Hell Lust screaming. What to do, of course, is to either jump or counter the assault. As you grow better, offence will become a natural part of your evasive moves.

■ Never overdo the dodging, however. You will always pay for doing more than you need to do. As an example, try dodging Agni and Rudra's hop-in moves. If you run in a straight line, the two behemoths will ineffectually slam the ground behind you. However, if double-jump, you will take damage from their jump move. The last boss fight in particular will punish you for excess dodging and weaving.

PS2



OBSCURE

UNLOCK GALLERIES
Complete each difficulty setting for different galleries.

UNLOCK LASER-SIGHTED PISTOL
Complete on Normal and the first gun you pick up will be the laser pistol.

UNLOCK MACE
Complete on Easy for a big stick with nails in it.

UNLOCK MORGENSTERN BAT
Complete the game, then start a new game in special mode.

UNLOCK MUSIC VIDEOS
Complete on each of the difficulty settings to unlock the music videos.

UNLOCK NEW OUTFITS
For every character that survives to the end a new outfit will be unlocked for that character.

CONSTANTINE

INFINITE SPELL SOUL ENERGY
While playing a game, press SELECT to enter the journal screen, then press ←, →, →, ←, ←, →, →, ←, ←, △, △. If you entered the code correctly, the screen will flash.

RAPID FIRE SHOTGUN
While playing a game, press SELECT to enter the journal screen, then press L2 ←, R2, ←, △, □, △, □. If you entered the code correctly, the screen will flash.

EXPLOSIVE HOLY BOMBS
While playing a game, press SELECT to enter the journal screen, then press →, ←, □, △, □, △, ←, →. If you entered the code correctly, the screen will flash.

SHOOT LARGE FIREBALLS
While playing a game, press SELECT to enter the journal screen, then press △, △, △, ←, →, →, ←, ←, →. If you entered the code correctly, the screen will flash.

BIG WEAPONS
While playing a game, press SELECT to enter the journal screen, then press ←, □, □, □. If you entered the code correctly, the screen will flash.

BIG DEMON HEADS
While playing a game, press SELECT to enter the journal screen, then press R2, ←, →, ←, ←, →, ←, R2. If you entered the code correctly, the screen will flash.

FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 2

BOX AS GHETTO FABULOUS
Enter "GETFAB" as the first name of a created boxer. Save the created boxer and Ghetto Fabulous will be unlocked under the heavyweights roster.

BOX AS LI'L JON
Enter "Liljon" as the first name of a created boxer. Save the created boxer and Li'l Jon will be unlocked under the light heavyweight roster.

ALL VENUES
At the game mode selection screen, hold or repeatedly tap ← until the sound of a bell is heard to unlock all venues.

SMALL FIGHTERS
At the venue selection screen, hold ↑ until the sound of a bell is heard. Select a venue to begin a fight with small versions of both fighters.

BROTHERS IN ARMS: ROAD TO HILL 30

OLD MOVIE MODE
Successfully complete the game on the easy difficulty setting to unlock Old Movie mode. This mode allows the game to be played in black and white.

INFINITE AMMO
Successfully complete the game on the normal difficulty setting to unlock the "Infinite Ammo" option. Note: This cheat must be enabled again if the player is killed, retires, or starts a new level.

AUTHENTIC MODE
Successfully complete the game on the hard difficulty setting to unlock Authentic mode. This mode has no checkpoints, saves, icons nor reticules.

SUPER SQUAD
Successfully complete the game in authentic mode to unlock the super squad.

SPEED THIS THE HECK UP
Successfully complete the game on the easy difficulty setting. Choose the last level at the chapter selection screen and play it on a different difficulty setting.

SQUAD HEALING
If your character is killed three consecutive times, you will be given a chance to heal any injuries to your squad. To quickly get to this point, intentionally throw grenades at your own feet.

EXTRA FIGHT STORE ITEMS
Although you can turn pro at any time, winning an Amateur title belt will unlock equipment you cannot find elsewhere.

BETTER RING PERFORMANCE
Make your ring entrances extremely extravagant; the more extravagant they are, the more the crowd will like you and the better you will perform in the ring.

AVOIDING KNOCKOUTS
In order to avoid a knockout, when your opponent gets close to you perform a grab. You will then exit knockout mode.

SPLINTER CELL: CHAOS THEORY

ELITE MODE
Successfully complete the game to unlock Elite mode, which starts the game with

ACTION REPLAY CODES

THE NEW CODES FOR ACTION REPLAY MAX

You must enter the M code first for these codes to work.

COLD FEAR (M)

E5GE-0142-Q8UMT
GB07-18WD-GVCB1
JoE1-QQ3J-5V7BX

INFINITE HEALTH
A6RE-NQY7-4JDXG
3PHQ-PCEC-GYIA9
NK9Z-33MN-D65GV
GQHX-RT1W-BY4YJ
KW6T-DMPF-Z8VZQ
6824-ZTMG-I2BBD
UIYI-57JK-UZG9R

INFINITE AMMO/NO RELOAD
3GMM-RPQ4-ZZF4R
PZX6-6AGM-HK4P3
AP9D-HG71-BFVEE
3GIK-TW7P-B7KQF
87CX-JZBY-N9KUB

INFINITE RESISTANCE
PUQ0-MREH-93EKB
HYJo-68UV-WACNR

ALL BONUS MATERIAL OPEN
C11G-G6QM-QHoGN
J9HH-7E8F-NUMBA

DEVIL MAY CRY 3 (M)

6CF8-ZKRD-NXPNZ
No72-26Y2-GGRoG
R6JR-N4KF-AYNY6

INFINITE HEALTH
MN4R-8H73-84E2V
3FK1-FoU4-T9IE9
NE6o-RX27-2PQ2Z
U9KK-KYY6-WFANR
YIE5-EJDH-P96ZI
KXoK-5UMX-E2TCH
WH59-UWAH-BEJPQ

INFINITE YELLOW ORBS
R3YD-X7G3-KoCHY
18F8-ZCWC-BGY4F

MAX BLUE ORBS
91XG-oRCM-XHYTP
UZDA-Z7FG-D3XZX

MAX PURPLE ORBS
M7YD-JWU8-CQQ98
NC76-ZAAM-5J2TZ

ALL WEAPONS AVAILABLE IN CUSTOMIZE
X2VB-P8JB-FRJDV
EIHK-YKQ7-4NQT5
R9GF-1GVT-4RBQM

ALL BONUS MATERIAL OPEN
HoGY-WTWX-oPPFH
Z352-6NXE-KBNYP
EV37-59HA-6YNUT
NK20-5HV7-YD634

ALL NORMAL LEVELS OPEN IN LOAD GAME
4N5F-9X7V-T8DQY
U81I-FN33-3BNBT
6PEK-VY4U-4AXW8

ALWAYS DEVIL HUNTER RANK
M68M-RM1o-Q542X
F45C-WARW-NZGJR
9I9F-89KK-5NWEC
EAN3-WYXE-HUU3I
GR6X-G655-7GXAC
ZKoV-X36Q-N5Y4V

INFINITE VITAL STARS S
FiWQ-4842-B6Q8F
RTX6-E1JV-8A76P
WRAG-N7UX-RWV36

INFINITE VITAL STARS L
UI6I-Y7Ho-073DM
2WY8-8AEo-EQUJF
M5J3-67ZI-14VMY

INFINITE DEVIL STARS
WYF9-F84E-F9YCX
29JF-X2K7-TWKXD
AIXU-Mo7U-M8THT

INFINITE HOLY WATER
TR3U-UVYK-71KPF
MQQT-EICE-YUVRo
Y4JW-A153-EMUFD

Pro Tips

TRAINING YOU IN THE DARK ARTS OF PS2

ACTION REPLAY CODES

BROTHERS IN ARMS (M)

87G9-HG4C-69BHM
M8CM-BN01-V5QU2
YHUH-4F39-EA2VY
JPYQ-DFT5-7KG35
BN46-FJDU-J32JF
TE7J-0ZDA-P5V22
FNBG-0X62-QJMHM
1MEA-WX1R-31KUN
EXYY-3Q0P-0QC9C
NTPF-BVW5-FMWUE
A6CQ-TDRQ-147EV
DUZQ-TW1M-MBKBZ
BGX5-5P27-774NT
TZMA-84YX-6P0T9
MEXD-ZP1X-EK2DW
BNFY-YQE0-74PC0
03AH-5PBC-9K2T7
KVPB-7197-DVKW7

AR BELOW V3.14 FIX

ZNPJ-TJXF-206YK
U57R-1V6U-HUEXA
V5QJ-416C-WFBUU
8P52-FM1M-31FMD
VFBZ-5AZN-7B3NZ
JC9W-8DUY-DKXZT

INFINITE HEALTH

00NB-4WW3-9YZDW
VBPU-97MA-ZUFH5
2619-MBR9-H8QHA

ALL MEDALS/EXTRAS/ LEVELS OPEN

2JW4-6JWP-8YHVR
E1TE-A3BG-BWNPX
DVUK-H77D-7N5ZZ

NEO CONTRA (M)

W9CC-FT3M-GXRJT
2GC9-3DKH-TVVHG

MAX HIGH SCORE

QH3J-497G-EK8DU
RQFQ-ADEA-ADH5U

INFINITE CREDITS

6CTW-UD24-1VFQ8
W9Q1-RRXY-VED4B

100% HIT RATE

EC5Z-9KAT-F5VQM
398H-3HUG-FH5WY

EVERYTHING UNLOCKED

MU70-NABM-DPCP2
CRKH-94X4-2J2UX
HXH6-54VJ-240QU

CONSTANTINE (M)

BR82-D6HN-97536
J39X-NDXZ-719XK
G3RQ-03VH-D7Y6N
YPVB-3GMD-U53DM
XHQH-G7T1-7MMWJ
BHPF-APQ0-2AWF8
Q0KE-5ZRF-C2B6D
0QKE-TU8M-MEITN
KR2U-49DR-KQFUE
NY5M-09N4-VCKJ0
R7ED-Y7U7-MWCHK

INFINITE AMMO/NO RELOADS

XFDR-9XQH-UWCP9
0A5P-X0MD-4MUV6

INFINITE HEALTH

34F7-MQ34-YMTYJ
P6K3-HF3B-YPHP1

INFINITE MANA

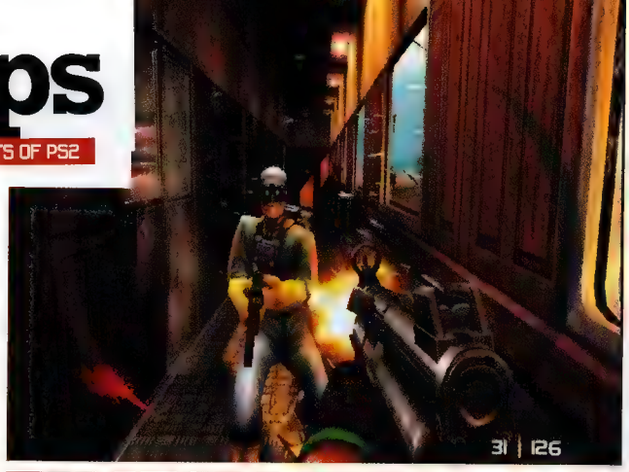
UZC1-3CPM-A6RRM
TMYQ-MV22-CYG66

BIG GUN MODE

Z5A6-WC5U-DZBZ2
GX6N-53YG-VR0N0

FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER MODE

N8P4-7WPM-P9M21
Y50P-KQ9K-37KQ1



TIMESPLITTERS: FUTURE PERFECT

CORPORAL HART

Successfully complete story mode on the normal or hard difficulty setting to unlock Corporal Hart.

TAKING OUT THE ENERGY SPHERE

In the factory where the TimeSplitters are being incubated, the giant energy sphere powering their growth can be taken out on the top level by flicking both the switches on either side of the ball. This will lower its defence. Then, take the lift down to the floor below and throw a plasma grenade (found next to the lift) at it, causing it to explode.

RESCUING THE JUNGLE QUEEN

Enter the prison cell on the other side. Create a line of vertical holes on the metal drum starting from the top. This results in a large pool of gasoline. Shoot the lantern that hangs from the ceiling to blow it up.

AVOIDING ZOMBIES IN MANSION OF MADNESS

When playing this level, you will encounter some zombies. To avoid them, duck. They will keep trying to attack, but you will not get hit. Note: this does not work with zombies with weapons.

DRIVE CAT IN TRAIN

When you get trapped in the room and the green gas floats in, use your glove to tip the statue back. When in that room, you will find the cat. You can then drive it around.

SLOT MACHINE IN TRAIN

When walking into the room where Cortez or Tipper says "Did I miss the party?", there is a slot machine. Walk over to it and press ⊗ to play slots. Press the buttons under "Hold" to hold that slot.

DEFEATING THE BOSS IN MANSION OF MADNESS

To defeat The Princess, side-step in one direction while aiming up and turning. The closer that Cortez is to the fountain, the greater the chance to avoid being swiped. When the Boss is about to die, step back and fire the last shots to avoid the final death blow.

DEFEATING THE BOSS IN WHAT LIES BENEATH

Use the Ghost Gun and position yourself carefully. Find a rock that shields Cortez's legs while allowing him to fire back. The fire attack from the Boss must drop to the floor before moving forward. The rock will protect you from most of the fire damage. Use a melee attack to kill the bats and allow the Ghost Gun to damage the tank.

DEFEATING THE DEER HAUNTER

In the Brotherhood house, you will be trapped in a large room with zombies. Take out the zombies with your pistol and baseball bat, but save all the shotgun shells that you can. When you defeat them all, the Deer Haunter crashes through the wall. The key to defeating it is to walk in circles around the beast in the middle of the room, continually shooting it in the torso with your shotgun while taking minimal damage. When it is defeated, the door to the next room will open. Additionally, in the room where the Deer Haunter is found, use your baseball bat to kill all the zombies. Do not use your guns; save them. When the Deer Haunter comes out of the wall, run past him and into his cave. Put your back to the wall and shoot him. He will not be able to hit you.

DEFEATING PRINCESS

When you fight the giant eye monster (Princess), run right up against the well and shoot. You should not be able to get hit.

DEFEATING THE TANK

Go to any ramp and stay out of the tank's sight. Use the Telekinetic Glove to take the ammunition when it spawns and attack the tank with rockets.

DEFEATING THE TECHNO-ORGANIC TANK CREATURE

Before you enter the room with the beast (at the checkpoint), take out all of the enemies in the room, then on the ground floor. Pick up the health and armour at either ends of the room. Go upstairs and turn right. Follow the landing around to the end to pick up some very powerful plasma grenades. Then, go into the room at the top of the stairs to face the tank creature. This beast spawns exploding worms from its rear. Remain close to the pillars to avoid being incinerated by the spreading explosions. As for the beast, aim your explosives and guns at the weapons it is packing on his back. These include lasers, machine guns, rockets and others. At any opportunity you get, throw the five plasma grenades you have and try to get them to stick to the weapons that have not been destroyed yet. These do a lot of damage to the beast. Keep hugging the pillars for cover. After a while, you will have most of his guns. Do not aim for the organic parts of the creature, as it takes no damage. When it is defeated, you will meet Jacob Crow again.

PLAY DRUMS AT THE DISCO

Walk up to the drum set on the Disco map and you can aim at each part of the drum part separately and play drums.

UNLOCK CASCADE CHEAT

Earn Bronze, Silver or Gold in Zone Control Arcade League.

UNLOCK HUMAN GUN SOUNDS CHEAT

Earn Bronze, Silver or Gold in Cat's Out Of The Bag challenge

UNLOCK ZOMBIE MONKEY

Earn Bronze, Silver, or Gold in Brain Drain Challenge

only the knife and unloaded guns. Have your sniper zoomed-in on the guard. When there is a fight, shoot, run, and catch Shetland. Then end the mission.

LEDGE GRAB

In order to do a better ledge grab, press ⊗, then, when Sam puts his legs up onto whatever the thing he is hanging from, then press forward while tapping ⊗.

FINDING THE BOMBS IN BATHHOUSE

After going through the gate when chasing Shetland, the first bomb is directly to the left of the gate that you enter. Go left through a little crevice and you should see a red light flashing. Go to it and disarm it. When you do that, one of Shetland's guards will then walk up the stairs. Kill him. To get to the second bomb, go up the stairs. Turn left then turn right and look straight ahead. You should see another red flashing light down below the walkway. Hop over the ledge of the railing and disarm the second bomb. When you are done disarming the bomb, jump onto the railing and pull yourself up. Two guards will be off to your left, walking along the walkway. They will very probably hear you; get ready to kill them. It is fairly difficult to kill both of them without losing a lot of life, or even dying. However, after you kill them, go down the walkway to the back wall. About halfway along you will see another red flashing light. Jump across the little gap and disarm it. Another guard will come through the back door right when you disarm the bomb. Kill him, then go through the door and finally meet Shetland. You will then have to make a critical choice to make; pull the trigger. Note: It would be a particularly good idea to quicksave the game whenever you disarm and kill the guards.

LEGO STAR WARS

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Destinys Child Lose My Breath	7
William Shatner Common People	8
Joss Stone Love Machine	9
Ashlee Simpson Pieces Of Me	10
Rachael Stevens More More More	11
Maroon Five This Love	12
Deep Dish Flash Dance	13
Nelly My Place	14
Brian McFadden Real To Me	15
3 Of A Kind Babycakes	16
Punk'd Main Theme	17
Dodgeball/Skatman John Skatman	18
Mase Feat P Diddy Breath S Shake	19
Black Eye Peas Lets Get It Started	20
Snoop Dogg Ft. Pharrel Drop It Like Its Hot	21
Avril Lavigne My Happy Ending	22
Usher & Alicia Keys My Boo	23
LL Cool J Head Sprung	24
Christina Milano Dip It Low	25
Eminem Just Lose It	26
Joss Stone Don't Cha Wanna Ride	27
Britney Spears My Prerogative	28
Christina Aguilera Ft. Missy Elliott Car Wash	29
Ja Rule feat. R Kelly & Ashanti Wonderful	30
Jamelia Dj	31
R Kelly Happy People	32
Paul Weller Thinking Of You	33
Prodigy Hotride	34
ShapeShifters Lola's Theme	35
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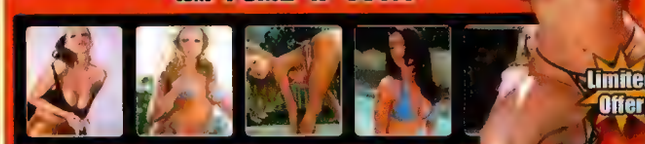

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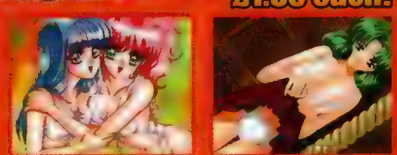

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HOW TO UNLOCK EXTRA STUFF

COSTUMES

Dante (No coat) – Complete Easy or Normal difficulties.
Dante (Devil May Cry) – Complete Normal difficulty.
Dante (No coat from Devil May Cry) – Complete hard difficulty.
Legendary Dark Knight – Complete Hard difficulty.
Super Dante (Unlimited DT) – Complete Dante Must Die difficulty.

SPECIAL DIFFICULTIES

Easy – Killed more than three times while playing Normal difficulty.
Hard – Complete Easy or Normal difficulties.
Dante Must Die – Complete Hard difficulty.
Heaven or Hell – Complete Dante Must Die Difficulty.
(In Heaven or Hell mode, enemies *and* Dante die from a single hit.)

SPECIAL UNLOCK CODE

At the main menu, hold all four shoulder buttons and rotate left analogue stick.

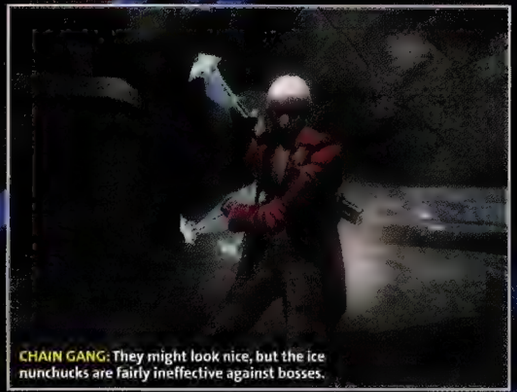
EXTENDED ENDING

Finish the game having killed 100 enemies or more.

"THE DEVIL MAY CRY – BUT YOU WON'T ANY MORE"

DEVIL MAY CRY 3 BOSS GUIDE

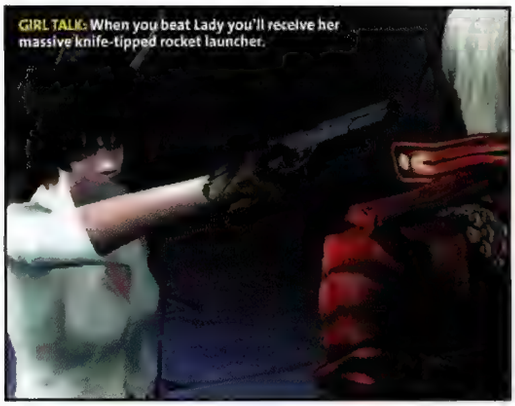
We muscled through the toughest game of the year to beat every boss for you.



CHAIN GANG: They might look nice, but the ice nunchucks are fairly ineffective against bosses.

KNIGHT NIGHT: The gauntlets and the Royal Guard fighting style combine to great effect.

DEVIL WITHIN: This is Vergil's devil form. This makes him twice as fast and twice as strong.


GIRL TALK: When you beat Lady you'll receive her massive knife-tipped rocket launcher.

MAKE ME POLE AGAIN: Swinging on poles is more of a gimmick, less of an actually *useful* move.

SPIN CITY: Power the dual Kalina Ann swords up and you'll easily get the better of most bosses.

01. HELL VANGUARD

Recommended Devil Arms: Rebellion
Recommended Guns: Ebony & Ivory
Difficulty: 2/10

ATTACKS

TELEPORT
After a few strikes, or if you retreat too far back, the Vanguard will sink into the ground and appear directly behind you. Avoid with a dash or a roll. Timing is everything.

SCYTHE STRIKE
When the Vanguard appears after a teleport, he'll swing at you with his scythe. Before the attack he'll raise it slightly above his head. When he does, *run*.

DASHING SCYTHE STRIKE
If the Vanguard appears from a teleport in mid-air, jump upwards (get the Air Hike ability if need be) and avoid the attack. As before, timing is everything.

JUMPING SCYTHE STRIKE
If you stumble into the black bubble that appears when the Vanguard teleports, he'll jump into the air and crash downwards. Dodge with a dash move.

02. CERBERUS

Recommended Devil Arms: Rebellion
Recommended Guns: Ebony & Ivory
Difficulty: 5/10

ATTACKS

SWIPE
A fast, powerful swipe of the Cerberus' paw will knock Dante back, so watch for him raising his arm backwards for a cue to retreat backwards or roll out of the way.

ICICLE DROP
When the Cerberus' middle head rises and starts howling, start rolling and don't stop to avoid the storm of icicles that'll start falling from the ceiling.

ICE BREATH
When the beast goes back on his hind legs and the centre head tilts downwards, air hike and fire with your dual pistols to hover above the freezing beam.

ICE BALL
If the centre head sinks right back into its chest, it's about to release the ice ball. Touch this and Dante will freeze. To avoid, retreat to the corner nearest you.

03. GIGAPEDE

Recommended Devil Arms: Cerberus
Recommended Guns: Ebony & Ivory
Difficulty: 3/10

ATTACKS

PURPLE ORB
These orbs form at the Gigapede's side. These can be avoided by either rolling or dashing to the side, or alternatively you can knock them back and cause some damage.

ELECTRIC ORB
When you see blue orbs forming at the Gigapede's side, immediately head for higher ground. The walkways at the side should keep you safe – they can't rise above these.

04. AGNI AND RUDRA

Recommended Devil Arms: Cerberus
Recommended Guns: Ebony & Ivory
Difficulty: 6/10

ATTACKS

SWORD SLASH
When the brothers bend their arms backwards, it's time to dodge, roll or dash because they're going to strike at Dante with a lethal sword slash.

GROUND POUND
If enough time passes or you deal enough damage, the brothers will go to each corner of the room and dash at you. Just keep rolling until they both land and stop the attack.

FIRE AND WIND BLADES
When the two bosses combine, raise both hands above their heads and start spinning, flame and wind will rush for Dante. Simply roll and *keep rolling* until they stop.

05. VERGIL (ENCOUNTER 1)

Recommended Devil Arms: Rebellion
Recommended Guns: Ebony & Ivory
Difficulty: 9/10

ATTACKS

SWORD SLICE
There are multiple animations for this attack, but they're all essentially the same. Simply air hike above and watch the animation play out, then leap behind him and attack.

TELEPORT
Whenever you get any distance from Vergil he'll do a teleport and slice combo, so whenever you see a flicker in the air, air hike immediately and avoid like a regular slice.

ORBS
When Vergil jumps backward he releases these floating orbs. Don't go mad with the rolling – methodically take them out one by one and get back to attacking Vergil.

06. LEVIATHAN HEART

Recommended Devil Arms: Cerberus
Recommended Guns: Ebony & Ivory
Difficulty: 5/10

ATTACKS

ENEMY SPAWN
Minor enemies will spawn throughout this boss battle and there's basically no way to stop them. You'll just have to deal with them as best you can. You can handle it.

PURPLE ORB
The centre heart will fire out three or four floating orbs. As ever, they cause

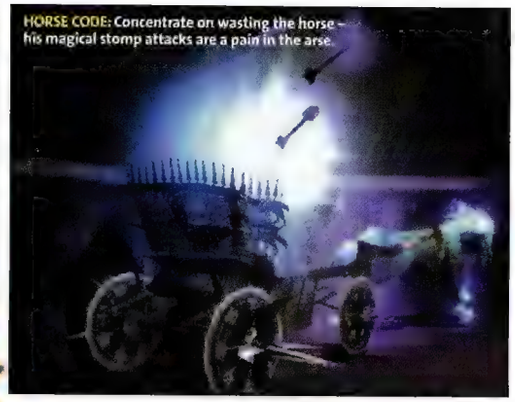
TOP TIP
A good way of avoiding enemy attacks (especially the three boss fights with Vergil) is to leap into the air with the powered-up air hike and fire Ebony & Ivory to stay aloft. You can float for a good few seconds, giving you time to take evasive action and roll out of the way.

MAN TO MAN: Dante's devil form won't help much in the battles with Vergil – he can transform too.

JUMP AROUND: Float in the air with Ebony & Ivory to avoid Vergil's various dash attacks. Easy.

Pro Tips

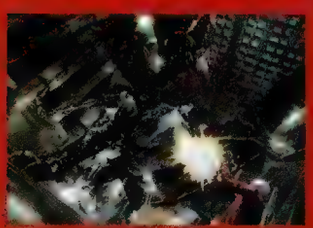
TRAINING YOU IN THE DARK ARTS OF PS2

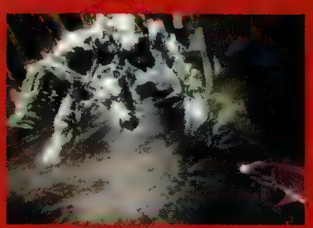

HORSE CODE: Concentrate on wasting the horse – his magical stomp attacks are a pain in the arse.

BARKING MAD: When the centre head lowers, get ready for the Cerberus' freezing ice blast attack.

TOP TIP

If a boss is relentlessly kicking your ass, try a different style – you'll be surprised how much of a difference it makes. For the most part we recommend Trickster, but some bosses have attacks that can only be avoided in Royal Guard mode. Think ahead and outwit the enemy.





damage, but these ones are super slow. Lure the spawning enemies into them for really easy kills.

RED LASER
The centre heart will shoot out two lasers that will sweep the room. To avoid them, air hike and fire Ebony & Ivory. This attack also kills any spawning enemies in the area.

07. NEVAN

Recommended Devil Arms: Cerberus
Recommended Guns: Ebony & Ivory, Shotgun
Difficulty: 8/10

ATTACKS

LIGHT PILLARS
When you hear the cue "Now you will become tired!" roll away from the four light pillars that burst out of the ground. Their location is random, unfortunately.

BAT BALLS
Nevan will fire balls of bats at you. Simply roll out of the way to avoid them. They're easy to dodge, but don't get careless – if they hit you, you'll lose a whole lot of health.

SPIN ATTACK
Nevan will spin around and black blades of energy will surround her. Simply move back about three leaps when you hear her say, "Get ready!"

ELECTRIC SWEEP
When Nevan does a long, scary laugh, she'll cover the floor in electricity. If you're quick enough you'll be able to air hike and hover with Ebony & Ivory to avoid it.

08. BEOWULF

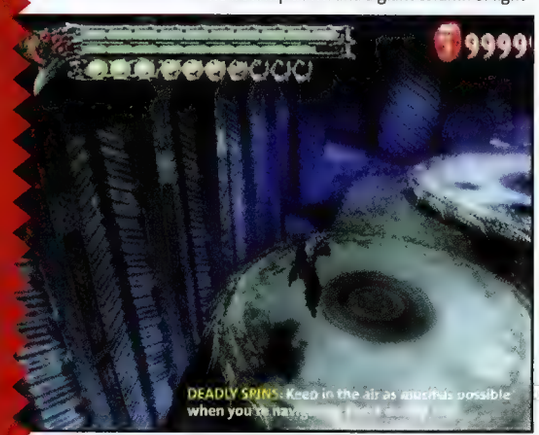
Recommended Devil Arms: Agni & Rudra
Recommended Guns: Ebony & Ivory
Difficulty: 7/10

ATTACKS

MAGIC STOMP
When you see magic forming around Beowulf, he'll stomp down and a giant column of light will surround him. Don't roll to avoid this, just run your ass off.

FEATHER ATTACK
When Beowulf is about half a room away he'll spread his wings and charge at you. You can't dodge this attack but you can block it using the Royal Guard technique.

COLLAPSING PILLARS
Throughout the battle, Beowulf will run to a corner of the room. When he does this, stay as far away as possible – pillars will start raining from the ceiling.


DEADLY SPINS: Keep in the air as much as possible when you're having [illegible]

09. GERYON

Recommended Devil Arms: Agni & Rudra
Recommended Guns: Ebony & Ivory
Difficulty: 8/10

ATTACKS

QUICKSILVER ORBS
When you knock his health down to half, he'll release these orbs that slow Dante down if he touches them. This is usually followed by a charge, so air hike away. Rolls won't work.

MISSILES
As Geryon makes his way around the area, he will release salvoes of missiles. To avoid them, either Trickster dash away or just roll like mad. They're fairly slow.

POWER STOMP
When the horse raises his leg up, a magic stomp like Beowulf's before him will occur. To avoid this simply move about ten steps back. You don't even have to roll or dash.

10. VERGIL (ENCOUNTER 2)

Recommended Devil Arms: Rebellion
Recommended Guns: Ebony & Ivory
Difficulty: 8/10

ATTACKS

BEOWULF COMBOS
These should present absolutely no problems whatsoever. Like his regular strikes, simply air hike and hover above him with Ebony & Ivory until the animation plays out.

KILLER BEE
Vergil will teleport into the air and rush downwards at Dante with a quick and deadly flying kick. Just roll to the side and the dimwit will miss every time.

DEVIL TRANSFORM
Vergil can transform into his devil form now. In this mode he takes less damage, is harder to catch with a strike and moves quicker. It doesn't last long, thankfully.

11. LADY

Recommended Devil Arms: Beowulf
Recommended Guns: Ebony & Ivory
Difficulty: 9/10

ATTACKS

GRENADES
After you attack Lady, she'll drop a few grenades. Watch for the red blinking lights and jump out of the way. Roll dodges won't clear the blast radius.

KALINA ANN
When you hear Lady start to speak, get behind the various items strewn around the arena – she's about to fire her rocket launcher. If it hits you, you're finished.

GUN DIVE
When Lady dives away from you after an attack, she'll either drop grenades (see earlier) or she'll recoil backwards, shooting at you with her pistols. Get rolling and don't stop until she ceases fire.

12. ARKHAM

Recommended Devil Arms: Rebellion
Recommended Guns: Kalina Ann
Difficulty: 8/10

ATTACKS

SPAWNING FISH
When Arkham melts into the ground, his fish will rise up and attack you. They may seem overwhelming, but Kalina Ann should keep them at bay.

SWIPE ATTACK
Like every other swipe or strike in the game, Arkham will pull his arm back and swing. Naturally, this is your cue to dodge with a dash or roll move.

13. VERGIL (ENCOUNTER 3)

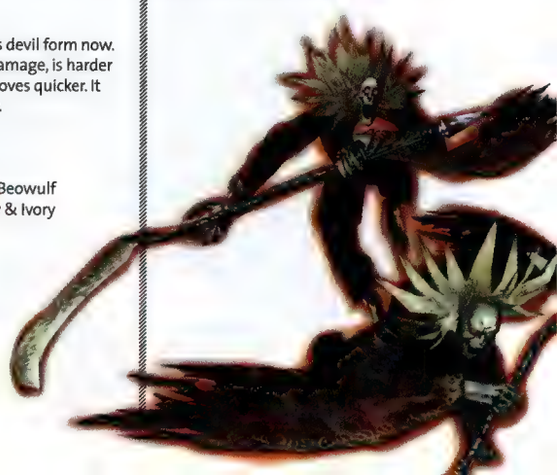
Recommended Devil Arms: Rebellion
Recommended Guns: Ebony & Ivory; Kalina Ann
Difficulty: 10/10

ATTACKS

HUNDRED ORBS
Similar to his earlier orb attacks, but, as you'd expect, there are a lot more. Stay in the same place if possible and fend them off. Move too much and they'll hit you.

HELM BREAKER
This powerful attack will be released when Vergil appears from a teleport. Stay on the move constantly while he does this and use Trickster Level three – if you have it unlocked, that is.

ROUNDTRIP
Vergil will throw his sword at you. It's hard to dodge as it's a homing attack so the best thing to do is let it come at you and air hike and hover at the last moment.



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PRO DOJO

NEWS UPDATE! Two things. Not enough pics with your tapes! Grr! And secondly it doesn't matter if you can't beat or just don't fancy any of our challenges below. Show us a great run on your favourite game and we'll make a table just for you! Send a tape today!

Are YOU better than the best? The NEW dojo is here, so send in your tapes and show the world what you're made of!

Go on – show us your skills! Either go for the big point challenges or do battle in the tables. A new entry at first place will give you ten points (eight for second, six for third, four for fourth, two for fifth). We then add the new points to your cumulative total (still with us?) to compile the PSM2 leader board where our top players wage an on-going war. And points win prizes, so if you top the leaderboard we'll shower you with prizes from our chums at Konami. It's super easy, so there's no excuse not to enter.

YOUR CHALLENGES ARE...

Unbeatable at games? Put YOUR high scores up against other PSM2 readers!

CHALLENGE #1

10 Points

BURNOUT 3

WE WANT
- Your highest Crash Mode scores.

RULES
- Tape your highest score on 'Cross Traffic'.

The best score we've recieved so far puts newcomer Jesse White at the top, beating the former champion Tom Lucas by thousands.

THE BEST SCORES

JESSE WHITE	504,607
TOM LUCAS	[illegible]
JACK JENKINS	452,840
GRANT BARTER	449,997
J.C. KILLS	433,916

CHALLENGE #2

10 Points

KILLZONE

WE WANT
- Win a 10 minute death match against 10 bots.

RULES
- No cheats, any level, any weapon set.

Sam Bolton stays at the top despite a sterling effort from Robert Payne. We still think you guys can do better than 56 kills though...

THE BEST SCORES

SAM BOLTON	[illegible] KILLS
EVAN HARVEY	51 KILLS
ROBERT PAYNE	56 KILLS
STEPHEN WILDSMITH	49 KILLS
KHALID-AL JAFF	46 KILLS

CHALLENGE #3

10 Points

PRO EVO SOCCER 4

WE WANT
- Most goals in the first season of Master League.

RULES
- Five star difficulty, Default (Iorga etc) team.

It's still the sunglassed boy Barter at the top of the table this month. Surely someone can knock him from his lofty perch next time?

THE BEST SCORES

GRANT BARTER	48
SIMON PAYNE	43
J.C. KILLS	31
DAVID COOK [illegible]	26
MILF COPPOCK (PSM2)	23

CHALLENGE #4

10 Points

THUG 2

WE WANT
- Your highest score on the Australia level.

RULES
- Any skater, no stat upgrades.

Once again, no-one's even attempted to beat Evan's massive score. But beatable it is. Come on, kids, put the work in and get on with it.

THE BEST SCORES

EVAN HARVEY	[illegible]
JAMES HARVEY	5,895
DAVID WAGNER	3,550
JOHN BLONDIN	3,920
ANDY KELLY (PSM2)	2,435,345

CHALLENGE #5

10 Points

DEF JAM: FIGHT FOR NY

WE WANT
- Your quickest victory against Busta Rhymes.

RULES
- No subway matches, any fighter, any arena.

Yet more attempts to topple Barter, but no one seems to be able to beat his time. Good try though, Mr Payne. Maybe next time, eh?

THE BEST SCORES

GRANT BARTER	0.13
ROBERT PAYNE	0.16
ADAM [illegible]	0.18
ANDY KNOWLES	0.28
KAYLEIGH SMIRK	0.36

MOMENT OF THE MONTH!

Done something amazing in a game? Show us and you'll score a massive... 20 Points

LAWS OF PHYSICS: DEFIED

By Jack Maggs

What other game can do this? The oh-so-controversial *Driv3r* proves once again that its physics are second to none. This movie from Jack shows a cars flying everywhere and a fluke of physics that we can barely describe. Check out next month's DVD for proof!

INSANE CHALLENGE OF THE MONTH

THIS MONTH: DEVIL MAY CRY 3

15 Points

The section where we get you to do fun things for kicks.

We want you to start the game from the beginning (that means no upgrades or special weapons, potential cheaters!) and reach the first boss – the ice-flinging cerberus. Your task is to take down the beast in as quick a time as possible. There are several ways of beating it – show us your tactics!

LAST MONTH'S WINNER

NO ENTRIES – X minutes X seconds

GTA: SAN ANDREAS

No entries for last month's challenge. If you want a cool 15 points then enter *this month!* Go on – impress us. You've literally no reason not to.

CHALLENGE ZONE

grand theft auto

10 Points

SHOW US YOUR MADSKILLZ!

1 EXTREME ENDURANCE

BY AZZ WALLIS

2 HOVERCRAFT ANTICS

BY JIM CONCANNON

3 WE ARE THE MODDERS

BY JOHN WILLS

CHALLENGE #6

10 Points

SSX 3

WE WANT

- Your fastest time on the Peak One Jam.

RULES

- Must use character with no stat upgrades.

It's still Evan Harvey here. The tables are suffering from 'usual suspects' syndrome at the moment. Get more entries in, people.

THE BEST SCORES

EVAN HARVEY	5149
CHRISTOPHER FOY	5:57
JOEL SNAPE (PSM2)	6:45
ANDY KELLY (PSM2)	6:59
DAN GRIFFITHS (PSM2)	8:19

CHALLENGE #7

10 Points

GRAN TURISMO 3

WE WANT

- Your best free ride time on Midfield Raceway.

RULES

- Any car, as long as it hasn't been customized.

The Diamantis brothers remain firmly at the top, but new fish Jesse White at least tried. He still gets points though, so well done, chap.

THE BEST SCORES

KOSTAS DIAMANTIS	0'49"992
GEORGE DIAMANTIS	0'50"159
JESSE WHITE	0'53"800
DAN DAWKINS (PSM2)	0'54"321
JOEL SNAPE (PSM2)	0'57"911

CHALLENGE #8

10 Points

SECOND SIGHT

WE WANT

- Get a top score on the sniper training.

RULES

- No rules as such, just be as accurate as possible.

Paul steps in briefly this month to steal the top spot from former leader Gavin McIntyre. Good work that man, but can you beat him?

THE BEST SCORES

PAUL MCALLEN	897
GAVIN MCINTYRE	894
AZZ WALLIS	875
JOEL SNAPE (PSM2)	791
NATHAN IRVINE (PSM2)	611

CHALLENGE #9

10 Points

SOUL CALIBUR 2

WE WANT

- Finish arcade mode on hard double quick.

RULES

- Any character, vary your move set, please.

Paul Grundy remains top of the *Soul Calibur* tree. Can't someone knock him off his branch. Send in your videos immediately.

THE BEST SCORES

PAUL GRUNDY	1.47.18
SIMON PRIVEN	1.49.12
J.C. KILLS	2.53.00
DAN DAWKINS (PSM2)	2.13.16
JOEL SNAPE (PSM2)	3.42.32

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Challenge 1..... Challenge 2.....
Challenge 3..... Challenge 4.....
Challenge 5..... Challenge 6.....
Challenge 7..... Challenge 8.....
Challenge 9.....

I also include (eg. Moment/Insane Challenge of the month)
.....

Name:..... Age:.....
Address:.....
.....
.....
.....

I enclose...

A photograph (with name on back) A video

ON THE DVD

Coming next month! We'll be featuring our favourite runs on the DVD too. Get famous! Get involved! Send a tape now!

LEADER BOARD

1	GRANT BARTER	83 points
2	EVAN HARVEY	52 points
3	JC KILLS	36 points
4	Paul McAllen	30 points
5	David Savage	30 points
6	Azz Wallis	26 points
7	Jack Maggs	20 points
8	Joseph Arieh	20 points
9	Simon Hahn	18 points
10	Jesse White	16 points

BUBBLING UNDER...

Robert Payne	14 points
Jim Concannon	10 points
Paul Deveney	10 points
Kostas Diamantis	10 points
Tom Lucas	10 points
Sam Bolton	10 points
Khalid Al-Jaff	10 points
Christopher Foy	10 points
Simon Douel	10 points
Peter Davies	08 points

LOOK-A-LIKES

We want your photos and created characters – does your dog resemble Dante? Think your mum looks like Dhalsim? Post us the evidence!

THIS MONTH...

HENRY TOWNSHEND
Scarred pipe swinger

5 Points

THAT BLOKE FROM AIR
Talented musician

From Marcus Jones
"They're very similar, although one isn't spattered with offal and blood."

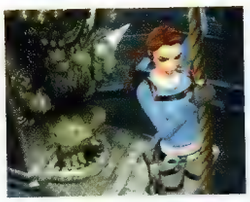
ALL THE UK PSP LAUNCH GAMES REVIEWED KEN KUTARAGI TALKS PS3 MGS4: THE FIRST PS3 SHOTS!

Next

WE DO IT ALL OVER AGAIN. DO NOT MISS THIS!

SOUL CALIBUR III

It's here – and we've got the exclusive. first play. We tear into PS2's best fighter yet and kick its ass clean off. You know you want it.



TOMB RAIDER LEGEND

It's the return of Lara – and PSM2 has the very first look at her brand-new adventure. Can she reclaim her former glory? We spill our guts.

BRAND NEW JAK AND RATCHET

We stick two of PS2's top mascots head-to-head in our exclusive gawp at their amazing new games.

You want more?! You've got it. We've even more gen on *Prince of Persia 3*, *Need For Speed Underground Most Wanted* played and *Star Wars Episode III* reviewed. It's all you need.

THE GAME

We've got the EXCLUSIVE first play of Sony's BIGGEST game of 2005.

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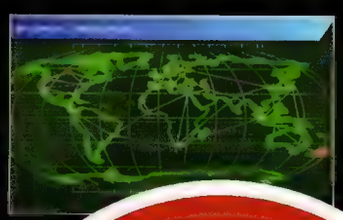
Month



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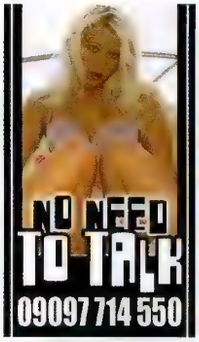

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Perfect for when you have to sneak into an enemy base... if it just happens to be filled with giant cans of Coke, that is. Better yet, the shiny tin finish is wipe-clean, it's easily recycled and you can suck your limbs in, taking on the mantle of a *completely inconspicuous* giant tin of the world's favourite brown drink.

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Age of Empires 2
Agent Under Fire
Alias
Aliens vs Predator:Extinction
Alone in the Dark 4
America's 10 Most Wanted
Angel of Darkness
Arc the Lad:Twilight of Spirit
Army Men: Sarge's War
Athens 2004

B = 02
Backyard Wrestling
Bad Boys 2
Baldur's Gate: D. Alliance 2
Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance
Bard's Tale
Battlestar Galactica
Beyond Good and Evil
Blade 2
BloodRayne
BMX XXX
Broken Sword 3: S. Dragon
Brothers in Arms
Buffy 2: Chaos Bleeds
Burnout 3: Takedown

C = 03
Call of Duty: Finest Hour
Champions League 04/05
Champions of Norrath
Clock Tower 3
Colin McRae Rally 3
Colin McRae Rally 4
Conflict Zone
Conflict: Vietnam
Constantine
Crash B'coot: Wr. of Cortex
Crash Nitro Kart
Crash Twinsanity

D = 04
Dark Alliance
Dark Cloud 2
Death by Degrees
Def Jam: Fight for New York
Defiance: Legacy of Kain
Deus-Ex
Devil May Cry
Devil May Cry 2
Devil May Cry 3
Disgaea: Hour of Darkness
Dragon Ball Z: Budokai 3
Draken: Ancient Gates
Drakengard
DRIV3R
Duel Masters
Dynasty Warriors 3
Dynasty Warriors 3: Xtr.Leg.
Dynasty Warriors 4

E = 05
Enter the Matrix
Everything or Nothing: 007
Evil Dead: Fist. of Boomstick

F = 06
FIFA 2004
FIFA Football 2005
FIFA Street
FIFA Street Soccer
Fight Night Round 2
Final Fantasy X
Fire Blade
Fire Warrior
FlatOut
Freestyle Metal X

G = 07
G1 Jockey
Getaway
Getaway 2: Black Monday
Ghost Hunter
Ghost Recon 2
Goldeneye: Rogue Agent
Gran Turismo 3
Gran Turismo 4
Gran Turismo 4 Pro.Edition
Grand Theft Auto 3
GTA: San Andreas
Grand Theft Auto: Vice City

H = 08
H.Potter & Chamber of Sec.
H.Potter & Philosopher's St.
H.Potter & Pris. of Azkaban
Haunted Mansion
Headhunter: Redemption
He-Man: Def. of Grayskull
Hitman 3: Contracts
Hulk

I = 09
Incredibles
Indiana Jones: Emp.'s Tomb

J = 10
Jak 2: Renegade
Jak 3
James Bond 007: Nightfire
James Bond: Agent Under F.
James Bond: E. or Nothing
Judge Dredd:Dredd v Death
Jurassic Park: Op. Genesis

K = 11
Kill.switch
Killzone
Kingdom Hearts

L = 12
Lara Croft: Ang.of Darkness
Legacy of Kain: Defiance
Legion: Leg. of Excalibur
LMA Manager 2003
LMA Manager 2004
LMA Manager 2005
Lord of the Rings: 3rd Age
Lord of the Rings: F. of Ring

M = 13
Mace Griffin: Bounty Hunter
Mafia
Man.United Manager 2005
Manhunt
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX 2
Max Payne 2
Maximo vs the Army of Zin
Medal of Honor Frontline
Medal of Honor: R. Sun
Mercenaries: Pl. of Destr.
Metal Gear Solid 2
Metal Gear Solid 2: Subst.
Metal Gear Solid 3
Midnight Club 2
Midnight Club 3: DUB Ed.*
Mission Impossible:O.Surma
Mortal Kombat: Deadly All.
Mortal Kombat: Deception
Mummy Returns

N = 14
NARC*
NBA Street v3
Need for Speed: Undergr.
Need for Speed: Under. 2
No One Lives Forever

P = 16
Phantom Brave
Playboy: The Mansion
Premier Manager 2002
Premier Manager 2003
Prince of Persia: S. of Time
Prince of Persia: War.Within
Prisoner of War
Pro Evolution Soccer 4
Project Snowblind
Project Zero
Project Zero 2
Psi-Ops: Mindgate Cons.
Punisher

R = 18
Rainbow Six 3
Ratchet and Clank
Ratchet and Clank 2
Ratchet and Clank 3
Rayman 3
Red Dead Revolver
Red Faction
Reign Of Fire
Res. Evil: Code Veronica X
Resident Evil: Dead Aim
Resident Evil: Outbreak
Return to Castle Wolfenstein
Risk: Global Domination
Robot Wars
Rocky
Rogue Ops
R-Type Final
Rumble Roses
Rygar Legendary Adventure

S = 19
San Andreas, GTA
Scooby Doo: Myst. Mayhem
Scooby Doo: Night of 100 F.
Second Sight
Secret W. Over Normandy
Shadow Hearts: Covenant
Shadow of Rome
Shadowman 2
Shellshock Nam '67
Showdown: L. of Wrestling
Shrek 2
Silent Hill 2
Silent Hill 4: The Room
Simpsons: Hit & Run
Simpsons: Skateboarding
Sims
Sims in the City (The Urbz)
SOCOM 2: US Navy Seals
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Sonic Heroes
Sonic Mega Collection Plus
Soul Reaver 2
Sphinx & Cursed Mummy
Spider-Man: The Movie 2
Splinter Cell
Splinter Cell 2: Pandora T.
Splinter Cell 3
Spongebob Squarepants
Spyro: A Hero's Tail
Spyro: Enter the Dragonfly
Star Ocean: End of Time
Star Trek: Shattered Univ.
Star Wars: Battlefront
Starsky & Hutch
Stuntman
Suffering
Sum of All Fears
Syberia
Syphon Filter: Omega St.

T = 20
Teenage Mut. Ninja Turtles
Teenage Mut.Ninja Turtles 2
Tekken 5
Terminator 3: Redemption
Terminator: Dawn of Fate
The Getaway 2 B. Monday
The Incredibles
The Punisher
The Sims in the City
The Sims: Bustin Out
The Suffering
The Thing
Tiger Woods Golf 2004
Tiger Woods Golf 2005
Time Splitters
Time Splitters 2
TimeSplitters: Future Perfect
Tom Clancy's Ch. Theory
Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell
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Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3
Tony Hawk's Underground
Tony Hawk's Underground 2
Total Club Manager 2004
Transformers
True Crime: Streets of LA
Turok, Evolution
Ty the Tasmanian Tiger

U = 21
UEFA Chmp. League 04/05
Urbz: Sims in the City

V = 22
Van Helsing
Vietcong: Purple Haze

W = 23
Way of the Samurai 2
Worms 3D
WRC: World Rally Champ.
WWE Smackdown vs Raw
WWE Smackdown! 5: HCTP

X = 24
XIII (Thirteen)
X-Men Legends

Y = 25
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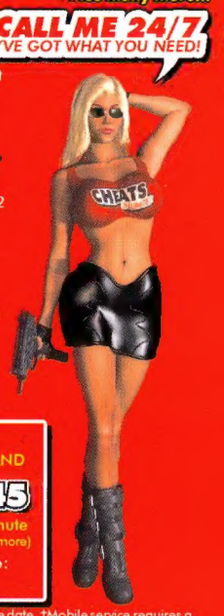

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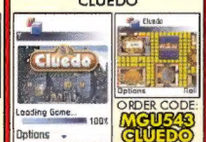
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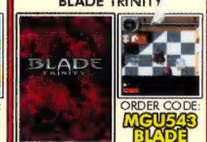
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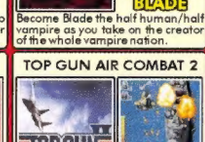
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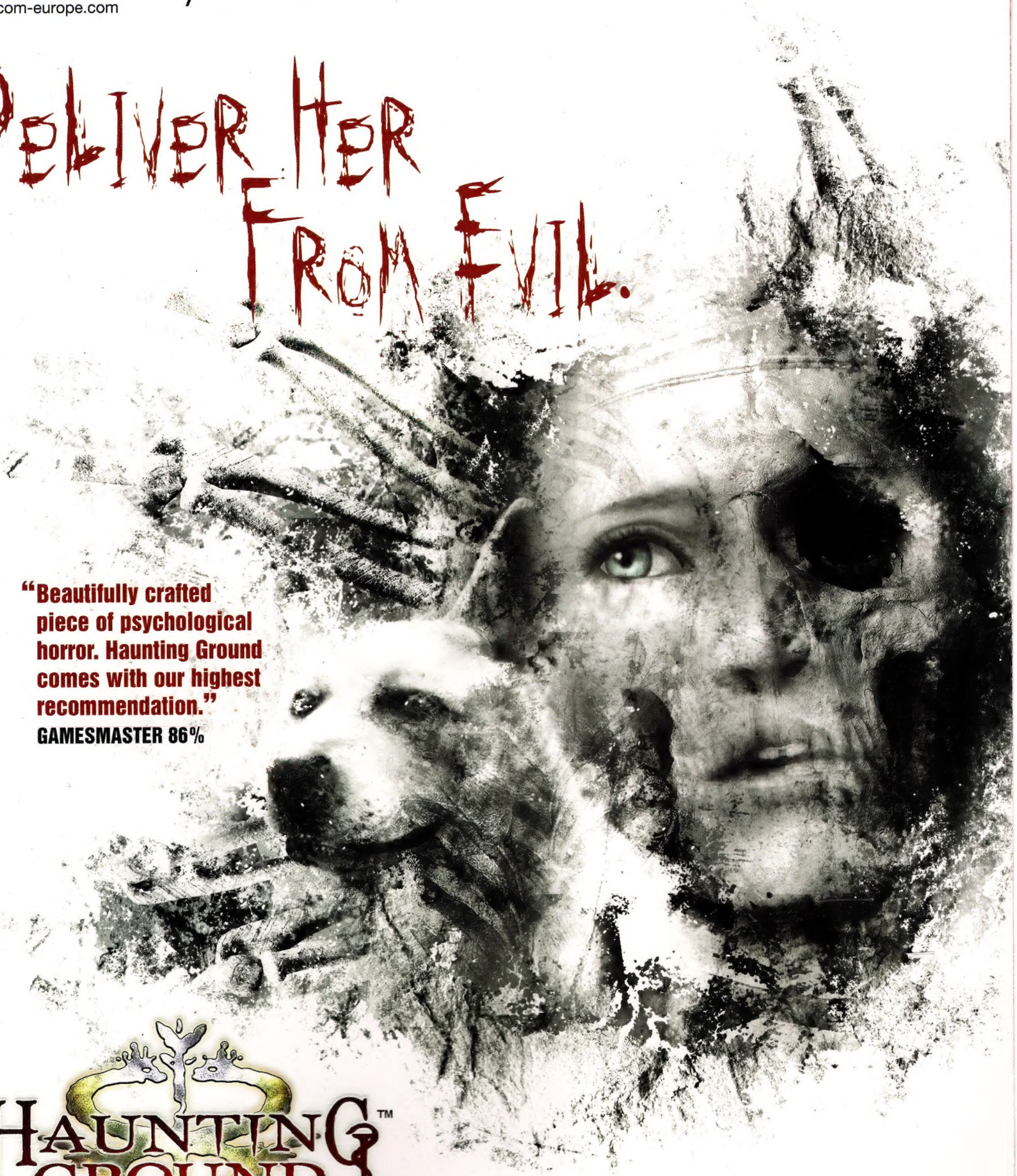

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